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# midnight magazine

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DEDICATION: To Mr. Lawrence Springer and passed away August of 1985. At age 76, he was the role model for a younger generation of fanatic film/paper collectors of which I am one small number. He will be missed and remembered.

All typography in this issue, with the exception of headings, has been reproduced by the ROYAL ALPH A X00 & Electronic typesetter.

FRONT COVER: Bill Nelson's fine rendering of a new-movie corpse from John Wood's recent LITTONGOL; BOCK SMITH: David Robinson meticulously captures David Smith and Mary Elizabeth from Michael's 1970s THE MAN WHO LAUGHS; PHOTIC FRONT: Mark Robinson; LITTONGOL: the elderly Boris Arlovich with the monster that made his a star in younger days; INDOE BAGO: Allen Kossowski captures the "shape-changer" from John Carpenter's abandoned classic, THE THING.

Welcome to Issue #34 of Midnight Magazine, celebrating our 22nd year of publication. First of all, let me announce to all the devotees that the first year of marriage is not hell - it's wonderful! At various times within the past year various friends have sincerely inquired whether or not I will continue to collect movie posters (is *very* expensive hobby) or even continue the publication of Midway. Well, the answer is in your hands! I must give an emphatic yes to the question: is there life after marriage? So that you to show that a wedding can be a first-rate dinner, and marriage itself can prosper.

But I have to tell about this year's disaster - Sue and I moved into our first (and hopefully last!) home on February 28, 1985 located on Kansas Road (Londonderry, I just saw A NIGHTMARE ON

ELK STREET a few weeks before moving) in Baltimore County. Being real movie fanatics, Sue and I arranged to have our Cable TV installed between 1 p.m.-4 p.m. on the Saturday we moved in. I knew we had trouble when the cable men arrived around 3 p.m. telling us we had running late - could we postpone for next week? Since we both were, it would be difficult to arrange another date, so I politely asked him to try to make it over today. Luckily, the installer arrived only an hour or so later. When I showed him where I wanted the cable installed (in the front living room instead of the back family room where it had been installed) he was sweetly - easily - flustered. He said I was talking about extra cable, running line through the attic, drilling holes in the wall, etc. In other words, a time consuming and more expensive job, and the installer probably was already late for his Saturday "hot date." Well, he worked like a beaver in heat, scurrying up and down our attic pull-down steps, running across the plywood flooring with a very heavy foot. He was spent, I know, probably hoping ours would be a very quick job since he was running late.

I sat on the back deck with Sue when suddenly, about 15 minutes later, I hear a tremendous crash in the area of the living room. I quickly went to see the foot and leg of the installer sticking through the ceiling, the ceiling falling in (about 18 feet in diameter). The attic flooring was only partially finished, and in his rush, he probably stepped through the ceiling. Immediately I hear crashing and a life-saving, "Oh hell, I stepped on a nail! Help, my finger! Help thinking, if I wasn't the mad, calm, and creative person that I normally happen to be, my six-foot-two, had hundred pound plus frame might have the tiny installer extremely apprehensive. Of course, even with his foot wound, the installer - still able-bodied but how much more careful and zig-zag-footed - finally finished the job overing us for the work. When asking about the damage to our home, he apologized and told us a contractor friend of his would call Monday and arrange to repair the ceiling to our complete satisfaction during the week-end. This was carried out right at midnight. Since this first day in our new detached rancher, our luck has only gotten better - thank heaven!

Please notice that this issue of Midway is four pages longer and marks a return to emphasizing art as the "classic" focus of our former title *Midway Magazine* as to do. Skills and movie reproduction still remain a terrific addition, but as long as we have the Midway-magazine, dedicated art staff we now have, I plan to fully employ their talent to the fullest. I hope the balance between art and photo is a pleasing one - comments are welcome.

Because of our new magazine format and because of the last postal rate increases over the last several years, we will have to charge \$3.50 for next year's issue #35, a slight increase in price.

I must convey a very pleasant surprise that occurred to me last winter. In sitting and reading last Sunday's issue when the

EDITOR'S CORNER (continued page 3)

# "I LIKE A GOOD MONSTER!": CHATting WITH DICK SMITH

INTERVIEW By Bill George

TRANSCRIPTION By Gary J. Suenko

March 11, 1985

Dick Smith is the wisest of American makeup artists having directed an entire generation of postwar makeup artist protégés who were prominently in the horror/science fiction film genre. Even the Academy Awards, about four years ago, has begun to recognize the makeup category as a regular award event rather than as a periodic "special" award. And most tellingly, the 43-year-old veteran and father figure, Smith, has at last been awarded the highest honor he could be bestowed by his peers in the industry - an Academy Award in 1984 for his makeup contribution to *AMERICA*.

In May 1984, *AMERICA*, Inc. sent smiling author Bill George [George's first book, *AMERICA*, is the Fantasy Film, he recently sold out its initial print run] and Dick Smith (a revised version of his long out-of-print "how-to" makeup guide is being published again by Image, Inc.) to the prestigious A.S.A. Convention in San Francisco. There, while waiting together in the same hotel, Bill George conducted the following interview exclusively for *AMERICA* magazine.

DICK SMITH'S contribution to film runs the gamut from LITTLE RITA was to *ALIEN* STAY, *HOUSE OF DARK SHADOWS*, *THE SPIDER MAN*, *THE SHOOTING*, *SCARFACE*, *THE DRIVER*, *MIDWINTER*, *CHERRY*, *THE HEROIC*, *THE FURY*, *THE APPARITION*, *THE HUNTER*, and *THE EXORCIST*, among many other titles (including a massive amount of work conducted for television). His contribution to the Fantasy Film genre - and to the makeup field in general - cannot be overpraised.

GE: When looking at your long career, which film specifically stands out to you the most?

DS: *THE EXORCIST*, because it is very satisfying in three aspects. Number one is the demonic makeup on Linda Blair. This was very tough. She had a pale little face with a outcast look. It was a difficult job to make her look horrible. I did about a dozen last makeup on her. Secondly, my top Sybil's strange makeup. Not at the time was 43 or 44. It was still a considerable job to make him look old, about 50. That makeup was a three-hour time-consuming makeup. It was a very complicated job seen on slight close-ups without any diffusion in the lens. It posed an actively different set of problems from *LITTLE RITA* when where I had to make Dustin Hoffman 121 years old. That was physically a task. Her's makeup had to look absolutely unlike makeup. Thirdly, the special effects such as the vomit pumping out of the mouth, or the head bursting around between, or the throat bleeding so like a bull-frog. The most tricky one, the one I was most pleased with, were the words "we're" being on her stomach.

There is a film where all of my work was used, all of it successful, all of it contributing to the success of the film. I don't know if I could do better than that.

GE: Which makeup contribution do you feel the most disinclined to because of lack of time or lack of budget?

DS: Well, I wish I had more time on *THE HUNTER*. But let me turn this around. What I really feel were deeply about are the many film I have done a job that I was pleased with, but for one or many reasons the director has not seen fit to use my work as I

wanted to see my work used.

I could give you a whole list of these titles - a case in point is *ALIEN*. I worked over six months creating three-dimensional replacement animation showing a 12-year-old boy grow up into Jeff Bridges (showing his face and shoulders). The sequence was edited by John Carpenter - perhaps with good reason, but I feel the effect is virtually destroyed. And it is sad to see the entire output of so many months of hard labor not being properly used.

GE: Which of your colleagues in the makeup field do you admire the most and why?

DS: Oh well - you're putting me into an embarrassing situation here. I will mention several - each artist has his own specific virtues. Russ Baker is, of course, my long-time favorite since I've met him when he was only 16 years old. Russ is a real genius. His whole life is makeup - he's totally devoted to it. He's a brilliant artist, sculptor, inventor, designer. On a personal level he's still a sweet, sweet guy - almost like a son to me.

Another artist I am also very fond of - we have a very close relationship - is Stan Winston who is a brilliant makeup artist - very daring. One thing I love about Stan is when he's faced with a problem, he never takes the easy way out. If there is a technique or method that is the most challenging, the most difficult, then is likely to take that route and succeed with it. That's why his work out and mine. I was approached to do the film *THE TOMBRAIDER* and he turned it down. I didn't feel it was my cup of tea, and I remembered Stan. The director and producer were insistent and were a little put-out when I gave them the final turn-down. So I was very gratified to see how beautifully Stan did with that project. I feel it was one of Stan's finest achievements undoubtedly better than I could have done. I told this to the producers and director - as well as Stan himself.

Another fellowed great is Tom Burman who is one of the finest guys in the business. He has a wonderful air of calm in a terribly frantic and nerve-racking business. In his house we had some wonderful adventures. I loved the work he did on the recent *ON PEOPLE*, but it's a pity to see how poorly the work was used. They lost by that alone.

There are many others: Doug Cawson, Craig Hencken, Chris Meier, etc.

On the East Coast I must give credit to Carl Rutstein. He's one of the most hard-working, dedicated, and ingenious makeup artists I know. He's talented on all levels - he's a special effects man, sculptor, artist.

John Carlisle is likewise another great talent, as is Kevin Kemp. Both John and Kevin are prides of mine - heading close to me in their own right. It is satisfying for me to see them go on their own and achieve wonderful results. They created the monster *ALIEN* in *ALIEN* CROW.

The list is growing - many brilliant talents are waiting for their chance. The pity of it is that there are so few opportunities for these artists to make names for themselves.

GE: Other than *THE TOMBRAIDER*, which film have you turned down for various reasons?





Catherine Deneuve portrays a vampire who has kept David Bowie youthful until now - from **THE MUMBER**.

pointed, but after a while you forget about the hurt - you look at the film and say it's a damn good film and I'm glad that I did it.

MC: Knowing your feelings about the 'hallo and glen' films, and also understanding the importance of makeup in these splatter films, how do you feel about the manner in which makeup is used in today's horror films as opposed to the exploitation films of the 30's?

DE: I am opposed to blood and gore films - gratuitous - where only purpose is to shock people. I don't think that's horror in the sense that the film **FRANKENSTEIN** is horror. I like a good monster, a story that has some sort of a monster that or a fight to it - some substance to it... like **THE EXORCIST**. Film like **THE SHOGUN**, where blood-letting is genuine to the story, is nevertheless done with discretion. I know that Scorsese reduced the excessive blood and gore and actually had the blood painted in a more muted fashion. He treated his subject matter as a responsible director should. That's a far cry from the typical exploitation film where you chop off an arm with a chain saw. Personally, I find these types of things distasteful - working as a human being.

On the other hand, I do not condemn makeup artists who do this type of work because it's not their responsibility. Also, these things are fun. It's the artist, the producer, and the directors who think of this and use the makeup artist to execute it. Makeup artists have to earn their bread and butter and can't be too picky.

MC: What new avenues of special makeup effects do you see arising out there in the next several years?

DE: I think computers are the next big step in a decade or more. I think all many of the puppets that are made today are made operated as dummies by combination of mechanisms. But they must be controlled by members of the crew. It is possible to have one creature operated by a dozen or more technicians. One pulling a certain lever, another operating a certain servo, and another tilting a certain sleeve. Others have to coordinate all this. It's a damn difficult job. The answer, obviously, is to go to a computer. I think when the projects are big enough, and the budget is big enough, that this will happen. We will have something akin to what **Star Wars** has done for a number of years - wind-upwork. Every section of one servo controlling one lip movement will be put on a computer. Action and timing will also be put on a computer. Then this section can be coordinated and played back producing the same desired actions every time.

You may also remember the film **THE LAST STARWALKER** used computers in a different way. They created the entire pictorial image on a computer. They say that in ten years they may have enough detail and process in the process so that they can create images of human beings. They can certainly create in the near future images of ghuman beings. Say a reptilian, scaly type of creature. They can do it at far less expense and have complete control over their creations. In the future the job currently performed by the makeup artist will then be performed by computer engineers.

MC: Won't that despecialize all the work done in the area of special makeup effects?

DE: Well not for it's still being done by human beings. Let me explain. Right now on many projects there are illustrators. They are not makeup artists or technicians. They have a little bit of drawing members images of creatures. So somebody can come in and say, design me a creature (such as the marvelous creature in **RETURN OF THE JEDI** that was down in the pit) in such and such a way. That 2D creature was not designed by makeup artists but was designed by some of these illustrators. I believe. Somebody there are sculptors and animators who can also create horrible images. They can create them three-dimensionally and these are artists who can draw them beautifully. These are computer artists who can draw a wonderful digital creature. Maybe he can also draw a robot if he can draw a robot, maybe he can draw a crab-like creature with a hairy, bony surface. As he gets more skilled he can get more detail and create a lizard creature. And then slowly, and more slowly, he can design a creature with flesh. Eventually, he'll be able to draw the surfaces and skeletons of human flesh. As these techniques occur, it will tend to subvert certain creation that makeup artists are now doing. Because as we are the ones now so skillful in creating these creatures. These are certain

special effects artists such as Carlo Rambaldi, and a few others like him, that do that type of work. It will be a helluva lot easier if that work could be done on a computer.

I regret to see that happen. The animators who did all the things for the Star Wars series, that sort of thing, will go first. These guys will be unemployed pretty soon. Those of the **LAST STARWALKER** again. You wouldn't cross that those ships weren't three-dimensional models up there doing the same things they did in **STAR WARS**.

MC: On the other hand, you see, I think that there will always be areas in which the multiple gifts of talented makeup artists will be needed for some other aspect. We cannot begin to foresee the types of scripts that will come up in the future. Five years ago would anyone be able to envision the types of scripts we have done in the last year or so? I don't think we should worry.

MC: Do you have any drama projects?

DE: No, not really. I've done just about every kind of makeup that has ever intrigued me. As a matter of fact, I've been interested in bringing new ground myself. I've given them weeks to do it. I offered to make for two weeks. I was given three weeks to do the work. I was faced with doing something that would ordinarily take three months in three weeks' time. I worked literally night and day for those weeks. I slept - I did you not - one hour per night. Occasionally, during the day, I slept on the desk. I did this for three weeks, completed the assignment, and it came out okay. I wouldn't argue of doing anything like that today.

Obviously, I've done that type of nonsense, that nonsense.

If I could get one **AMERICAN** to do a year, that would be heaven. That job was the first assignment in many years that I did all by myself. I spent about six weeks or so making the whole and having the team later. I applied the makeup by myself. It was wonderful. It was peaceful. It was just a joy. And then, could you imagine being nominated for an Academy Award for doing the makeup on a film? I mean, this wasn't been done before. I don't know the makeup on the film would be anything particularly newsworthy. During the filming - then - it wasn't such as apparent that this was going to be a cinchy film.

MC: In conclusion, can you relate one funny story related to your career?

DE: Remember **JOHN OF DARE** **SHOOTER**? Ben Curtis was the producer/director of this. He's a great guy. He said, "I want some vagrants on the neck that look like real aliens - I don't want too little hairs. I want some teeth in there!"

So, I went home and I tried to resist in making just a damn appliance to put on the neck to give Curtis the effect that he wanted. They looked lovely! I even bit into the clay with my own teeth. It didn't look real; it wasn't working. For me, I gave up. I went to my super. My wife was cooking and artists just dipping the real into the flour. And I'm watching this absurdity. I say - I don't cook one of them. Now I'll show him. I say I'll show I cook one of the real outfits downstairs, bit into it, and it made wonderful teeth marks. I very carefully made a negative of the tooth bite and made a new positive. All I had to do was remove the holes where the jawline teeth bite marks and we had wonderful bits. When I applied the makeup I colored them black and blue. They were the worst goddamn history you ever real!

MC: How does the assistant become the master? Here **Shane Smith** is at work on a production he would love to forget - **SPACED** (see **DEATH BITE**)

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Young Nancy Thompson sits in the last row of her English class in high school, trying to forget about the savage murder of her friend Lisa last night. Being terrified by the same horror night, when as her dead friend experienced recurring the same friend also knows-as-forgotten, she is gently lulled to sleep as her teacher introduces Shakespeare's Julius Caesar - "what is seen isn't always what is real...Something in human nature was corrupted." As a student reads from the text, time appears - wearing her bloodied body bag - and before Nancy out of class crying for help. Nancy is confronted by a demonic hell creature who sports the very same steel claw as the friend in her dream. She is lured down into the ballroom where she confronts the horribly burned friend of her dreams and backs the young victim against the wall. Raising her arm the protection, she severely burns her arm against a hot pipe. Immediately, she finds herself back in class screaming, assured from her recurring nightmare. However, her arm still shows the ugly burn scar she recalled in her dream. But she's never - so is she?

This terrifying sequence from A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET brought the name of writer-director Wes Craven to the forefront of media attention this past year when this gripping, imaginative horror film became one of the most successful independent productions of the year.

The artistic as well as financial success of A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET as well as the recent release of Craven's first horror film on videotape - LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT - prompted this writer to go back and examine the major genre films which Craven has directed - putting the cinematic films he directed such as DEARLY BELOVED, SILENT TRAIL, and the recent full-length CHILLER on the back shelf, I limited my analysis to the three major films that Craven wrote and directed which illustrate the common themes, points-of-view, and imagery which run throughout all his work. These films - LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT (1972), THE HILLS HAVE EYES (1977), and A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET (1984) - uniformly suggest what I view as the primary Craven concern: the horror of family violence.

The events you are about to witness are true. Names and locations have been changed to protect those individuals still living." This visual marker begins Wes Craven's first exploitation horror film, 1972's LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT. Even though this film clearly establishes the primary themes to be found throughout Craven's work, this initial scene of violence is only the first example of bloody action permeates the film.

LAST HOUSE is a film of juxtaposition and contrast: a film visually comparing the idyllic family of love as exemplified by Doctor and Mrs. Hollingshead and their 11-year-old daughter Nell to the perverted family relationship existing between a gang of psychopaths who have just escaped from prison.

Mari, and together with her friend Myrilla, a girl from the wrong side of the tracks ("She takes care of the horses down at the Johnson place - but that's not all I hear she takes care off"), is lusting to a "bad part of town" to see marijuana and attend a Blood Lust concert. Mari, obviously a virgin and a flower-child

(her parents just gave her a "peace-sign" necklace), easily accepts to her friend Myrilla that her breasts have recently filled out and that for the first time she feels like a woman.

The gang of psychopaths - according to a radio broadcast - are waiting time for murder, drug-smoking, and rape. Their female companion, Sadie, kicked a German shepherd to death during the daring escape. The brains of the gang, the cigar-smoking Crow, knows his illegitimate son Junior solicited to help to control him. Crow's right-hand man, Wesel, has been convicted of child molestation, rape, and sexual abuse with a deadly weapon. These sadists represent every perversion of the American family unit - accentuated to the highest exploitation, stereotypical degree. If they were not so sleazy and sick, these characters might be found in a typical comic book.

Sadie is the sexual plaything of both Wesel and Crow even though each can claim her as his exclusive property. Craven, easily sitting for humor, casts Sadie's character in a comical mold. "I see my own freedom" Sadie exclaims. "Well, have you been making these women's lib supporters?" Crow leers. Finally Sadie declares, "I'm not putting out until we get some more women here - equal opportunity!" Ironically, even though the media-described "feminist women" sexually satiate her two male companions, her sexual lust is focused toward other women (reproaching the early 70's discourse that all women's libbers are lesbians). Thus, we have the primary motivation why the gang bothers both Mari and Myrilla and approach Junior on the street to buy an ounce of Canadian. Crow and Wesel both want their own women, a real woman and appreciates a girl man. And Sadie desires an object for her sexual satisfaction.

After both girls have been terrorized, beaten, and choked by the gang, they are locked into the trunk of a car and driven out into the country. After the car breaks down alongside the roadside rural million of Mari's own home Junior, wanting the girls physically pulling out the car's door, enthusiastically shouts, "I think I've found the problem. I pulled this out and it's all covered in oil!" This humor suddenly evokes this repulsive violence as both girls are dragged into the woods, chained, forced to publicly urinate, defecate, rape, and finally murdered. Myrilla is strangled in the wall of her back and is forced to crawl painfully to the nearest town where she waits to die before spitting into Wesel's face, he painfully holds her up to her feet repeatedly stabbing her while her companion, Mari, the virgin, is forcefully raped by Crow, and after vomiting and saying her prayers, Mari instinctively walks chest-deep into the nearby river whereby Crow swims her to death.

And as stated before, LAST HOUSE is a movie of peculiar juxtaposition. Craven plays the entire automobile-driving-out-to-the-woods sequence entirely for laughs. While a hilariously mediocre folk-rock ballad sings about our sick state of characters over the soundtrack (incidentally, the entire score was composed by chief villain David Hess who portrayed Crow), psychotic Crow is handling Sadie and sits on his lap as he carries on a conversation, cigar in

mouth, with Measel. "Stop interrupting my rhythm!" Crow demands. As the two men discuss their desires for sex crime of the century, "Sister herself" interjects, "It's all because of 'Squidgy Waddy' - telephone poles are really a giant 'W-bull-bull' (pencil). I can't look at the Grand Canyon without cursing my leg!" Finally, it is the female sexual language which arouses her.

In fact, it is always these psychopaths' rampant sexual energy which ignites them to violence. When Phyllis, after first being abducted, has her blouse buttons undone by Crow thus exposing her nipples, it is said she runs behind waves both of her hands around Phyllis's small breasts - "I see her flesh," she declares. Being threatened by this assaulting female, Crow's playful teasing turns to violence as he now punches Phyllis in the stomach and then violently rapes her - rape as a symbolic gesture of his threatened violence that as an expression of lust as crime.

These strong sequence of violence and torture are cross-cut with sequences of Doctor and Mrs. Collingwood as their home decorating a case for their missing daughter Marie's birthday or sharing a quiet drive. In other words, though not in a subtle fashion, Crow is contrasting the perfect family relationship to the most perverted of all family relationships.

Since 1932 was the period in which filmmakers exploited the nipple/breast crisis sentiment, in this same vein the police here are treated as buffoons and objects of stupidity. When not cross-cutting to the Collingwood household, we cross-cut to our local caricatured Sheriff and Deputy as silent stoics to brutalize the murderers' abandoned car, but quickly decide that they have more important work to do. Later, when investigating the disappearance of Marie, the police car stutters and dies - the Deputy stops to fill the petrol car with gas. After they flag down a pickup truck hauling cages of chickens that is being driven by an elderly black woman, the woman shyly assures that the lairmen will have to ride on the roof - there's no room inside or in back. As soon as the truck kicks into gear, the Sheriff and his Deputy fly off. "I've got the law on my side," the Sheriff assures. "I got the chickens and the truck on mine!" she counters with a booming grin.

Just as ironically as Marie recognizing her family's malice offends her torturers drag her into the woods to slaughter her, these same miscreants of evil, after clearing themselves by putting on dressy clothes (suits or a tux), stumble upon the Collingwood residence disguised as businessmen. Since Marie took the car, and since it is evening, the doctor invites these fine people to spend the night as guests in the spare bedroom. It is not long before one of the men sees a photo of Marie and realizes exactly where he is!

In exploitation cinema, all the scenes quickly fall into place. When Mrs. Collingwood reminds Juror, whose seating has worsened her from bed, she immediately recognizes that he is now wearing Marie's "beach-slip" necklace as futile gesture from Marie who had in the most obvious "duplex" gesture warned Juror as stills denote "the shows when the wind blows," and she wanted to win him over to help her escape. Quietly sneaking away into the woods, the Doctor and his wife find the murdered body of their daughter and immediately plan revenge.

In another explosive sequence of juxtapositioning, Mrs. Collingwood, claiming that Measel "looks like a man with a huge appetite," lures him outside while the others sleep. "I've dreamed of a man who can take me easily - with his hands tied behind his back," the calculating wife confesses as her fantasy. Measel, taking off his tie, tells and orders her to tie his up - "I can make love to a woman like you with both hands tied - I'm the god." After she goes down on him, we have a close up of her violent face and quaking teeth literally shaking the bound victim.

Cross-cutting to her husband (indeed he has been body-trapping the house and leading his she-goat in the basement, the husband is confronted by Crow who flaunts the fact that precisely his daughter Marie was huge - had lost the doctor's "a baby." Trying to take it out, the stage-aged doctor is in search for the physically superior Crow. Meanwhile interrupted by his son Juror who dunks a gun in his side father, if only takes Crow a few seconds to induce Juror to take the beating of the god-like Crow. Crow and time his trains out. But this has given the doctor just enough with the "peace" sign in the background, psychotic Crow, Sadie, and Measel (with knife) strikes a menacing pose from Crowen's film - LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT.

©Peace



After saying her prayers and walking into the water, Innocent 17 year-old Marie is shot to death. From Crowen's first film - LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT.

Time to slip into the basement, sav up his chain saw, and out Crow, after a brief struggle, to cinema.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Collingwood, who has been straining with Sade, forces the lairmen to flee running and falling into the swimming pool. Just as the vengeful wife stands Sade in the south killing her, we cross-cut again to the doctor threatening into the soft tissue of the with his chain saw blade just as the Sheriff, blood splattering all over his nose, arrives on the scene, ending the movie in a freeze-frame.

Was Crowen's directorial debut, centers the fact that it was retained as one of the silent and most violent horror/exploitation films ever made, was hopelessly misused and mutilated in execution. The viewer becomes emotionally involved with the ritualistic torture and slaughter of the innocent teenagers, but Crowen's awkward direction of actors, his crude, unstable method of juxtaposing diverse sequences, and his obvious gags in portraying these ghastly murders in such vicious, manipulative terms with the audience did not support any theory that here is a director to watch.

Crowen did appear to be a director who was skilled in maintaining suspense, he did have a marked sense of humor and irony which also were cleverly incorporated into the script, and the sequence whereby Crowen's silent-of-the-charger from Marie coming into the water to save little dog resulting in these same shots at home only hinted briefly at true talent lurking below the surface.

LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT has earned its position as a sleazy, exploitation sequel, a full classic, but one that was handled as the little society of teenage or exploitation. But the world had not heard the best of writer/director was Crowen.

Was Crowen real returned in 1977 with his vastly improved technical skills making THE KILLERS WERE HERE - his strongest statement yet on the horror of his childhood. In LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT, a family of psychopaths with a typical upper-middle class family. Here, on a much more sophisticated level, Crowen juxtaposes another typical middle class nuclear family (grandparents Big Bob and Ethel Carter, together with a son, daughter, son-in-law, grand-daughter baby, and newly-dead - Sarah, daughter Betty and finally with a family of animalistic savages who live in the southwestern desert hills (Paul Joffe and Rome with children Mercury, Mars, Pluto, and Rafe). Never has the family unit and family relationships been so essential to an exploitation horror film.

The movie begins moodily in the deserted southwest desert - dilapidated, jagged-shouldered peaks and buildings not in the sun as the whitening wind and sand cut through the area's only sign of life, Fred's service station. The Carter family, trailer in tow, are headed out vacationing to California. But they are traveling off the beaten path (back against the wishes of the southwestern old man, Fred) to find a silver mine (that Big Bob and wife Ethel have just inherited on this their 25th wedding anniversary, no least anniversary, no least).

Later in the film, after Big Bob buys his car into a fire, stranding the family in the middle of the desert, and after he finds many miles in the dark to return to Fred's service station, only then does Fred reveal the nature of the beast.

What in the film place was speaking me. The kid - whether on the way. But this second kid - something went wrong. It was so big he came out sideways and almost tore poor Myrtle apart. He weighed 20 pounds and was hairy as a monkey. When he was 10 years old he was as big as I was. Accidents were occurring all the time - dog falling in the well with their heads all off. In 1938, when I was getting supplies, the whole damned house burned to the ground. My little baby girl was burned to a cinder - but the monster-kid wasn't even burned. I split his face with a tire iron. I took him to the desert and left him there. - Long enough time ago for him to steal a horse nobody would miss. - Long enough for him to raise a litter of wild kids. - Long enough for a devil kid to grow up to be a devil man."

Previously after this revelation, this same devil man - known by his tribes (Paul Joffe and Rome with children Mercury, Mars, Pluto, and Rafe) - was seen dragging Fred outside where Joffe continually beats him over the head with a piece of metal, leaving his dead carcass hanging on a shed over here. Later, when Peace returns to the tribe, sleeping daughter Ruby who earlier wanted to accuse her family by leaving town with Fred, he all-awake! rears, "Hear you hear! I'm not away, today!" to Gordon Fred! I found Gordon Fred dead good!"





**Popeye Jupiter** - his head split open with a tire iron - is patriarch of his clan - THE HILL HAVE EVES.

Big Bob Carter, recently retired from the police force because of a bad heart, hurries through the deserted desert, often times momentarily freezing, shivering his head to his chest in pain. He hears Jupiter's howling voice as one patriarch of one family confronts the other - "Go-ede, Maw-maw - help me!" The exhausted Big Bob drops amid cries of hysterical laughter and lies vulnerable in semi-conscious state. Friend Popeye Jupiter appears, rushing to the rescue of the family - "We're about ready." Then using wooden stakes as nails, he hammers Big Bob's outstretched hands to the desert soil. He will now guarantee Carter's body in gasoline - gasoline drained from the family car - and set it ablaze.

Meanwhile, Carter's youngest son Pluto is outside the trailer investigating his dog master's growling. Going to the car where sister Lynne and her husband Doug are sleeping, the younger men nervous lobby breaks down confessing he saw the other German shepherd - heavily - killed up in the hills. (Known to any of these men, Jupiter's little bald-headed son Pluto (portrayed with gusto by Michael Beckman) is lying inside the trailer peering over the sleeping females. He sneakily gathers knives, nails, and food from the kitchen.

Suddenly an explosion shocks up in the desert, followed by the female cries of Big Bob Carter screaming, "He hit out, put it out!" Doug yells in to Brenda to watch over his infant daughter Katy before he investigates the fire which broke. Unbeknownst, Pluto has his hand over Brenda's mouth physically silencing her. Jangling from the roof of the trailer, Pluto's huge brother Mars swears inside the trailer pulling down milk, milking his ground beef, and sucking the blood from the family peasant as the blood trickles down his mouth. Pluto, who is attempting to rape Brenda, is pushed aside by stronger, older brother Mars who yells, "You wait until you get to be a man!" Pluto throws a tapered tantrum as Mars selects Brenda in bed. However, the primary object of Mars' pillaging is the infant baby Katy, oblivious to these goings-on.

The family, realizing that Big Bob Carter is near death, attempts to save his comfortable. Mars at the trailer, Lynne orders to see baby Katy in the arms of Savage Mars. Lynne insistently kicks him in the groin, slowly dropping him to a stooping position. Brenda, hysterical, crawls in from the bedroom, pushes a knife blade back of Lynne, who attempts to stab Mars in the chest. But First Evil Carter is not quite-blank after she attacks Mars with her brow. Mars also shouts the knife-wielding Lynne who falls backwards, but she musters enough strength to stab Mars in the upper leg area - near his groin - drawing a great deal of blood. He instantly shoots Lynne for the second time, this time killing her. Howling instructions, Pluto invents air with Katy. Mars drops the terrorized Brenda outside, stabs his gun barrel down her throat, sets his arm clenching, and flings her down gleefully stating - "I'll come back for you later, girly!" He runs off into the darkness.

Popeye Jupiter's family is ecstatic over the arrival of the "heredotable" baby. Pluto, reducing to Mercury about the special bowl in store, states, "If you're a good dog you'll get some!" Popeye Jupiter himself declares, "It's about time we get some powerful food around here. - we caught a young Thanksgiving turkey!"

The compassionate Ruby, harboring a more universal interest toward the baby, as well as chastised by some for setting out the cooked dog (Mercury) that the family just prepared as a "special treat" - some who, "You don't like dog anymore!"

The beautiful Shepherdess, in the best Lasalle tradition, kneels up upon the earth-guard Mercury, kissing his from the rear wrapping him off balance to his death over the side of the cliff.

Popeye Jupiter, feeling the loss of a son, stands over the burned, charred body of patriarch Big Bob, collecting a brain's essence:

"Your dog was sort of my boy, you dog. I'm gonna kill your skin for that! You come out here and you skin your life in my face - skin your fingers in my palm that was a bad mistake. I'll see the skin time your skin up soon baby. I'll see the heart of your skinning memory. I'll eat the brains of your kids' kins!"

Popeye Jupiter's children listen to his every word, nodding and whistling during appropriate moments, encouraging his with chants, "You call 'em Poppo!" Strongly, Jupiter is performing for his family, to help fuel their admiring surge for revenge, as much as he suppresses a father's grief. Jupiter's hatred stems from the rules and laws of civilization, is partially justified in avenging the slaughter of the Carter family. Claiming territorial rights over his possessed desert land, the Carters are in fact trespassers. And the 10-foot law of nature clearly states a wild animal will fight to the death another animal that invades his territorial space. In fatherhood of his clan, Jupiter understands too strongly the nature of a father's pride, power, and authority when he loses Carter's corpse by claiming he will watch the skin him his crime as much more and set the heart of his memory. The slaughter of interlocking strangers is not his sole position or pleasure. To maintain his position of authority, to protect his family, he has a duty to order their destruction. And now that son Mercury has been killed, the next fitting revenge for Jupiter to carry out is not the destruction of patriarch Big Bob Carter but the obliteration of his long-growing family roots, the destruction of his reproductive season, the slaughter of his children. In Jupiter's universe family obliteration is the ultimate crime.

Jupiter's tyrannical, iron-claw grip on his family, maintaining his authority, is threatened by Ruby's earlier attempt to run away with Brenda and her attitude of rejecting the "heredotable" baby. Even her suggestion of eating dog meat is a major crack in the wall of authority.

Likewise, the Carter family, seemingly closely interwoven, has its internal rifts. After being lost in the desert, searching his son Big Bob, sister Brenda and her stepmother who are really disowned toward his wife "20 years I'm a dog in the world, goodness granted in Cleveland. - Just none of these bastards come as close to killing as my old goodness wife and her goodness roadhouse, her wrong name, and her goodness attraction. Well, at that time holding Katy outly demands (planning down at the infant), "Watch your mouth!" Even though the family unit is never perfect. Finally, it is all over!

THE HILLS HAVE EVES' desert derives into wild birded shrikes performing Mars's primal need to sacrifice all for the welfare of family. Doug, his wife just wearily murdered, stood only with his dog and a wife, enters the ungaily rocky desert hills to rescue his baby. But it is only through the heroic efforts of compassionate Ruby (who delivers a dog trapped in darkness to Mars who has been ordered by Jupiter to kill the child) who forwarding her own safety runs to the hills with Katy delivering the child to her father. But Mars pursues her classically method, and Doug and Mars soon struggle in a physical battle to the death. Using a stick, Ruby tosses a deadly interference on Mars' neck to even the odds, and after Mars stumbles backward, succumbing to the snake's poison, Doug - with savage determination in his eye - slams the prove Mars to death with brutal, powerful shoulder thrusts. For a brief moment, resting off the shoulders of socialized men, Doug himself becomes the primal beast swinging the cold-blooded slaughter of his family. The film ends on a closeup of the grin, scarred face of Doug.

The maternal daughter of Popeye Jupiter, Ruby, prepares to throw the snake on Mars - THE HILLS HAVE EVES.



In conclusion, Brown appears to be saying only a fine line separates civilized men from savagery - for we are motivated by the same passions, desires, and instincts. These common denominators truly raise both of these seemingly disparate families and, feeling much more in common than the audience would have originally thought.

Mr. Brown's latest 1964 release, his trademark & signature ON THE STREET, is his finest film to date, mesmerizing the audience by placing in front of them the shocking revelations that each of the young characters in the film experience. Given, we are not aware if we are viewing or are awake, and this primal fear of nightmares allows Brown to manufacture one of the most frightening experiences in horror ever mounted for the screen.

The nightmare personified - Fred Krueger - is the quintessential bogeyman, wearing a dirty green and red sweater, a beat-up old black hat, who wearing metal gloves which house talismans-as-fingernails which he uses to slash his victims to death - in their dreams, as they sleep. Because he is the stuff dreams are made of, even though he is captured and can no longer physically damage to Vincent Price in HOUSE OF WAX, he does have the ability of suddenly materializing from out of nowhere. He fearlessly enjoys wrapping his claw-fingers against metal surfaces creating sparks in the night and horrible, screeching screams. His arms can stretch out and elongate to three times their normal length. He loves to torture victims via self-mutilation by using his knives to cut off a finger which he uses himself or by rising into his car wheel. Since he is a living nightmare, his body is invulnerable and cannot be immediately attacked. He can appear between two people legs as victims sleep in the bathtub pulling them down into the bottomless "black liquor" below at the top appears above as a bright light, a small hole, and the darkness covering the surface. Krueger can turn stairs into sawblades preventing escaping feet from ascending. Even if stating aloud "this is only a dream" - he can still be under the bed covers when victims think they are asleep and still slicing them to a bloody pulp dragging them forcefully, suddenly, up a wall, across the ceiling, and flinging the lifeless body with a bloody splash to the bed below. He can materialize as a smoking, saliva-filled tongue which assaults out of the telephone receiver, "the poor boy friend now" no one, finally, appear anyone of anyone. Again, he is the stuff that all nightmares are made of, and this victim is powerless to fight back.

A nightmare ON THE STREET, using a low-budget exploitation horror tale - Mr. Brown's preferred format - is sufficient to appeal to the teenage audience being produced with one eye geared toward sensuality. Even though a NIGHTMARE does not explore the family as precisely as House to the degree that Mr. Hills and THE CRY did, nonetheless, a NIGHTMARE ON THE STREET even more subtly illustrates this same theme whereby horror is generated via the deterioration of the nuclear family with the resultant breakdown of society. The theme of revenge becomes essential here just as it was pivotal in THE CRY and THE CRY.

The two lead female characters illustrate this theme of family deterioration. The first victim - Tina - is murdered after indulging in sex with her boy friend Fred in her mother's very own bed. After the murder, the police discover that Tina's father deserted the family, portrayed by Michael Bergman, wears the outfit of German shepherd mast - from THE HILLS HAVE EYES.



her mother ten years earlier, that her mother is now in Vegas with a boy friend, who then she left her to year-old daughter alone for the weekend. Certainly, the primary "badster" theme that seems who indulge in recreational sex get slaughtered in the end. But Brown's lesson on the beyond this off-end theme. Fred, also guilty of the same crime as his mother and mother to himself, is immediately tracked down and thrown into prison. The police lieutenant father of the other girl, Nancy, uses his contacts to "pull" in some cops. He used as "body" Nancy's boss disciplinarian. In other words, it is the failure of the family unit which contributes to the life-threatening problems these kids face. Fred, innocent of murder but only guilty of having a "bad" idea, is easily accepted in his prison cell by an invulnerable prisoner who later shows in his dreams and murder him as he sleeps defiantly. Slowly, his prison bed-mate forces him to a wall, wraps himself around his throat, and slowly kills him - smothering his neck - from the ceiling. The concerned Nancy, who is a nurse, sees in the police room efforts. Her father to check the cell to see if Fred is safe. But the adult interview too late. Her father, the lieutenant, only thinks his daughter is upset over the death of close friend Tina.

This theme is further developed by director Vincent Price. Even though both of her parents are still married, they literally live apart. Her father, the policeman, is always shown on the scene of a crime, in the patrol car, or at the station. Her mother is always shown at home. In the house, weeping out as Nancy accuses her, drinking herself from a liquor bottle of gin. When she reaches each of her parents the next, each individually lets her down.

Throughout the movie, after constantly being tortured by her remaining nightmare, her mother can only give her the nonsensical support - "It's only a nightmare" to which Nancy responds, "That's enough." But mother has been withholding imperative information. Even after Nancy is able to bring back the family's black cat from one of her nightmares, with the name "Fred Krueger" or the headless, her mother can only mutter, "Nancy can't hurt you. You've been dead for a long, long time." Nancy, in a justified rage, yells, "You're dead!" He kills her all the time and you acted like it was something I had said. She kills it in a dream.

Ironically, when Nancy later returns home, the entire house has been equipped with security devices - iron rods cover every window. But this security device means in a strange way. It not only keeps criminals out but also keeps inside - but it keeps people inside prisoner, at least as far as Nancy is concerned. Her mother has the only key which opens the bolt-locks. Finding Nancy in the kitchen, standing in front of an inactive furnace, her mother reveals the truth. "Fred Krueger" was a filthy child murderer who killed at least 30 kids in the neighborhood. He drove in crazy when we didn't know who he was. It was worse after they caught him." At this point Mrs. Thompson produces a bundle of papers which she reads in the furnace. Looking at the package, she produces the metal gloves with the razor-sharp knives-attached, which the Fred Krueger wears in her dreams. She continues, "The lawyers got fat; the judge got famous. Somebody forgot to sign the search warrant. In the right place so Krueger was free. A bunch of us parents looked him over. We found him in an old abandoned boiler room where he used to take his kids. He took pictures, posed it all over the place, let it up, and watched his burn. His dead because Nancy killed him. I was told his 'mama' her mother later tells Nancy from her dream here - 'You face things - that's your nature, that's your gift. But sometimes you have to turn away too!'

Just as the younger ones are being punished for acts of immorality and the sins of their parents, the parents in turn are being punished.

Relationships are breaking down as families disintegrate. A mother constantly gets loaded to escape the guilt of a crime who committed the matter how justified the act of killing Krueger might have been. The mother, Krueger, the parents who have killed his father but by attacking the parents in their dreams, but by simultaneously slaughtering their off-spring, destroying their seed to future generations. Just as Pope John illustrated in THE HILLS HAVE EYES, the most satisfying face of revenge is not the slaying of the guilty parent, but the slaying of the innocent children. Nancy, in the best Jane Le Curtis tradition, who at the beginning of the film escapes the paralytic downstairs of Tina's house with her friend Tina who is being driven away by her mother (Nancy's mother) and it. Thompson (John Saxon) - troubled parents - A NIGHTMARE ON THE STREET.





The youthful cast from *A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET*: [left to right] Rod, Tina, Glen, and Nancy (effectively portrayed by Heather Langenkamp).

By the organic means (coming from the bedroom upstairs), immediately, cools the atrocious advances of Dian by silently telling him, "we're here for Jim now - not ourselves!" therefore, Craven murders his young victims not alephistically because they engaged in recreational sex, but more complexly - as an act of revenge because of their parents' killing of Fred Kneaser.

As an statesmanlike, Wancy's father, Lt. Thompson, also lists her chapter down at a crucial moment. He phones her father, "Listen Nancy, I got a proposition for you. I'm gonna get the guy who did this. I want you to be there when I bring him out today." Fred Kruger dies it, and says I can get him. It's my right-er he comes to find the door down in exactly at twelve - and he goes to sleep returning to the boiler room to comfort Kruger when the alarm sounds her at exactly 1230 a.m. as she currently gets the floor at precisely the moment she remembers the night she was born. The next day, the morning after, his is to be found. Her mother, sleeping off the latest drink, has the two of them locked in the house with the nuclear war. Thompson finally hears the warning of his screaming daughter who has failed Kruger by body-trapping her house - "It's late survival!" she exclaims declared - the policeman enters his own bedroom to find Kruger straddling - his wife is used as the best of every society - and when they enter the house, the blue light is still shining brightly and each of them in his daughter - she was punished. Lt. Thompson is taking over his wife - right in front of his eyes.

"Finally, we left alive in the bedroom by the police, while Mary remembers a book her late boy friend did send about green-pells, whereby the dresser may turn plaster back on a rightside, take all the energy back, and thus destroy the rightness. And her back to her parents' bed, she needs Kruger's assistance." "I know you two well already." It's too late! This is just a dream. You're not alive! I want my mother and friends back! I take back every bit of energy I gave you. You're nothing - ya-ho!"

[illegible]

On the surface, *Creep* is a film to be little more than well-crafted exploitation fluff - out to appease a market that craves gratuitous slotted-leading. And most certainly *LOSH* lives on the LPF, the HILLS HAVE EYES, and a NIGHTMARE ON WAKE STREET. But *Creep* is a lot more than that. It's a movie that's a little creepier. *Creep*'s film is mounted with intelligence, wit, and maybe a touch of class - on the deepest, psychological level - what truly frightens audiences. He fully comprehends the human condition, and he's not afraid to show it. He's a disintegrator, and the resulting horror, understood, is the meaning of dreams and realities just how rapidly the civilized world might become the savage. His films are full of imagination and are fully constructed, mind-boggling night sequences that will keep you awake at night.

While it was a brilliant accident *LOSH* *LOSH* on the LPF to his latest fully constructed phantasmagoria of terror (A NIGHTMARE ON WAKE STREET) only goes to dramatically illustrate that *Creep* is the artist.

The dominant factor that separates the films of Craven from the rest of his peers is the dark edge and savagery which Craven sees as an essential trait in all human nature. His horror films are not adult fairy tales or jocular spoofs. Instead, Craven's heroines get dumber and are undoubtedly uglier revelations concerning man's innate "heart of darkness." *Spoofs*'s films about the world



line, walking through her most frightening nightmare only moments before her death, is the first victim - from Wes Craven's A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET.

Connors's wedding, and DePue's more visually stylized - but Capote's films are the most broadly disturbing because at the heart of his films is the failure of the human animal to rise above the evil contained within our very souls. In Capote's world there are no happy endings, not even the American family's coming out as true winners.

FOR TRADE (OR MAKE ME A MONEY OFFER!): Original author Philip  
Frostbooks; ORADULA & THE BLACK CAT; Three Days (2001-2002-1981).

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WE HAVE YOUR MIND IN MIND.

# AN ANALYSIS OF THE INVISIBLE RAY

BY MICHAEL BRUNAS

## Ultra-Scientific Meets Transylvania Gothic!

JOHN J. GIG

April 18, 1935 was truly a monumental day in the history of the horror film. The Palace Theatre in Hollywood had been awarded the honor of playing host to the world premiere of the 10th Universal horror spectacular. Amidst all the halcyon of an unscheduled studio publicity department in dire need of a riot, the first reel of the BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN filled the screen to the first accompaniment of a thunderous blast of Franz Waxman's cyclonic on the soundtrack.

The fact that the film was a hit was not entirely unexpected. For four years Universal had pioneered the horror genre with astonishingly profitable results. The INVISIBLE MAN, THE BLACK CAT, and, of course, the original versions of FRANKENSTEIN and DRACULA did much to sustain the studio's fortunes. The BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN, referred to as "one part project" of the head of production and son of the studio's founder, Carl Laemmle Jr., had all of the advantages of a top-gear Hollywood production. The first day grosses of the film's official opening on L.A.'s Pantages Theatre yielded a whopping \$2,700, which roughly equaled an average weekly total for the handling movie palace. By the time the film opened at New York's Famous Playhouse Theatre, where it promptly broke all attendance records, three theaters engaged in a lawsuit to determine which had the legal right to exhibit the prized property.

Yet it was in this frenzied atmosphere of a runaway hit, of shattered boxoffice records and landauis on wheels, that the first sign of collapse became visible - collapse not only for the horror genre but for Universal Pictures as well. The BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN was, by any standard, a superbly crafted, state-of-the-art horror movie, but was, in many ways, the last song of the genre and the last great horror movie of the decade. The enormous shadow of bankruptcy began to loom over George or Hollywood's leading purveyor of screen terror, Universal Pictures.

By the spring of 1935, bankruptcy was probably the best thing on the mind of the BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN. In the span of four years, Boris Karloff went from being an unknown and frequently unemployed character actor to Hollywood's Number One Bigger-Man. Karloff enjoyed high visibility in the trade papers as he was lauded with film offers from England as well as Hollywood. Not only did he see his home studio, Universal, a cascade of suitcases on his old contract, but there were enough demands on his services to keep the 43 year old actor comfortably solvent.

An universal agreement over the script for his new vehicle, BLACKWAX, Mutual Selznick of Gaumont-British Studios bought himself trying to acquire Karloff's services for a script entitled MONSTER. On May 1, Karloff committed to Columbia Studios for the first day of shooting THE BLACK ROOM, a fairly conventional Gothic melodrama in which he landed the role that was a part of him who became under a medical curse. Next to be before, Warner Brothers was eagerly vying him for the lead in their forthcoming shocker, THE WALKING DEAD, which was already set for production.

It was quite a different story for Karloff's next-sink, Boris Lugosi. Unlike Karloff, being typecast as a horror specialist did little to increase his personal fortune. In the film they made together for Universal, Karloff automatically secured top billing, even in the recently released THE MUMMY in which Lugosi clearly dominated the action. Lugosi was fanned to accept this humiliation for one simple reason: the demands for his services were negligible and he was not in the position to exact the princely

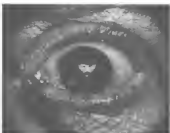
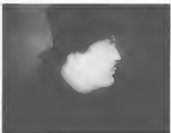
fees, demands, that were routinely making to Karloff. In short, his Lugosi name was not bookable. So, as the details of Karloff's lucrative film offers made their way into the pages of the Hollywood Reporter, Lugosi, as usual, scrambling for the crumbs, had to convince himself with two silver lines which the already dead trade paper was fit to publish. One, that he had just arrived back from England from shooting a forgettable "B" picture titled THE SECRET OF THE WAXY CLOSET, and secondly, that he was made president of the Los Angeles Soccer Club.

Enter Universal Studios. Producer David Blumond, who co-wrote the Karloff-Lugosi team for THE MUMMY, hoped to find Lugosi a place in his long awaited Karloff project, BLACKWAX. However, the world by Bernard Villier which had Karloff in the decidedly sympathetic role as the roborous stranger had run into problems. Anxious to have another Karloff-Lugosi thriller in release before the end of the year, important studio executives had the project on hold and decided instead to press a new horror script into production. By August, Universal announced that THE INVISIBLE MAN would commence shooting on the studio lot for famed designer's production unit.

The premise of the film was exciting - an all-out effort to break away from the Old World Folklore that had been the mainstay of conventional horror film. Instead of assaulting the film with vampires, werewolves, and other-worldly types, the new Karloff-Lugosi vehicle would give ALL rain to the studio's special effects genius, John P. Fulton, whose contribution to THE DRAGON MAN made it a landmark trick film. The film further explored the genre's most compelling theme - man's inability to cope with his own desires, and the corruption of science. As such, it was a heavy dose to FRANKENSTEIN and, most especially, to THE INVISIBLE MAN. The film was not based on a tried literary source and, to compensate, stressed production values, modern settings, and the illusion of adhering to scientific fact.

THE INVISIBLE MAN is usually cited as an example of race science fiction with its dependence on special effects and a plot that broadly hints at space travel and, more specifically, depicts death rays and ultra-modern scientific hardware. The film, however, builds on being at such ways and films casts itself in familiar Gothic horror trappings complete with an imposing Egyptian fortress well enough shadowy, low-keyed photography to sustain a suspense. In fact, the script's insistence on opening the film in Transylvania was merely a ploy to associate the audience's created association with vampires and, of course, Boris Lugosi.

It is here that Dr. James Hahn (Boris Karloff) assumes a boy of understandably skeptical colleagues, long impatient with his outrageous and unsubstantiated theories and brooding demeanor to unveil his mad, mad findings. Hahn has constructed a fabulous astronomical projector which can isolate light waves from the great nebula Orion and reproduce them on a screen to re-bless the early evolutionary stages of the earth as it emerged from the cosmic chaos of pre-history. Hahn and his guests meet this remarkable achievement rather cavalierly for it is anticipated to set another spectacular discovery. Hahn has uncovered evidence that some ago a gigantic meteor crashed into the South African continent leaving behind a mysterious element more powerful than radium. Convinced they are on the brink of a major breakthrough, a scientific expedition headed by Sir Francis Stennis (Gunter Klingford) and



Two frame close-ups: After Karloff completed his filming, optical special effects made his face and hands glow the eminent Belgian astro-chemist, Dr. Felix Frank (Bela Lugosi), set out for an uncharted area of Nigeria accompanied by Frank's young wife, Clara (Frances Drake).

Frank, broadly persuasive of the discovery he claims for himself, breaks away from the others and soon locates the site of the fallen meteor, which is still a raging radioactive inferno. Daring a lone suit, Frank descends into the blaring pit and distills the element called Radon 4, but in his zeal, he becomes so mesmerized by the poisonous rays that his body becomes a super-charged receptacle, emitting a wild phosphorescent layer of energy which brings instant death to whomever he touches. Frank confines his monstrous condition to Frank, who quickly compounds an antidote which is itself no other than 21 strips away Frank's last vestige of sanity. When Frank and Stevens return to Paris in triumph with the sample of the element which Frank extracted with the chemist, Frank's mental disintegration is complete.

After harnessing the powers of Radon 4 to cure his mother who was blinded by a laboratory accident years earlier, he turns his discovery into a means of disposing of his wicked enemies. When Clara marries Stevens' nephew, Ronald Drake (played in a straight-faced British school boy manner by Frank Lawlor), Frank descends upon Paris, killing off each of the scientific boys, including David. In his last attempt to kill Clara and Drake, his mother intervenes, warning the antidote from Frank's hand, statically accusing him of breaking the first law of science, threats to counteract the deadly radiation which sears his body, Frank disintegrates into a flash of flame.

THE INVISIBLE MAN not only re-united the two horror stars, but also brought together director Stuart Walker and writer John Coffin who successfully collaborated on MONDOU OF LONDON, released with a season back. Coffin's new script bore a marked resemblance to the earlier film. Having adopted General Hargrave's idea, Sledge Thompson into the Broadway hit, Coffin went full with the dramatic value of injecting an undercurrent of sexual tension even into his horror scripts. With THE MONDOU OF LONDON and THE INVISIBLE MAN have as a counterpart a scientist whose frenetic obsession to his calling leads to madness and murder and ultimately comes to a better end while trying to digest his younger, sexually depressed wife who was more or less forced into the arms of a

Two frame close-ups: Super achieved Lugosi photographs the retina inscribed death vision of this poor victim, some compatible with. The only difference is the nature of the unearthly contemplation which his character was afflicted with. Spectroscopy, for Henry Hall is a MONDOU OF LONDON and radiance pulsating for Boris Karloff in INVISIBLE MAN.

However, there was trouble brewing for the project even before the first day of shooting. Speculation grew that a sale of the studio was imminent, possibly to Warner Brothers, and as the news of the studio's discommodities piled up, the studio's financial condition was increasingly precarious. The studio brass refused outright and never walked off the picture in a huff. As tempers cooled, the parties involved met in conference for a compromise, but none could be reached. New settled with a complete cast and crew and a fast approaching starting date, producer heads searched the lot for an available director to helm the project.

In desperation, they chose Lambert Hillyer, a veteran director with a hundred films to his credit and a flair for action subjects, especially westerns. Hillyer was already on the lot preparing a script called HOLDS IN FORTUNE, which he would never complete. Now Hillyer, a seasoned pro who was accustomed to working quickly under pressure and who directed William S. Hart in no less than 25 colors, was about to take on a major Universal horror film featuring Boris Karloff and Bela Lugosi. This would not be the first time that Hillyer would helm out a troubled Hollywood stage, shortly after completing THE INVISIBLE MAN, he would fill in for ailing picture director William Wyler in a long-forgotten program called CAPTAIN CORCORAN, and a few months later he would substitute for Edward G. Robinson for his second and last horror feature, DRACULA'S DAUGHTER.

Universal clearly regarded THE INVISIBLE MAN as a major production, allowing it a thirty-day plus shooting schedule, but some penny-pinching measures became necessary. The studio took pains to create a big picture look despite a modest budget, often camera-flying old sets, utilizing glass shots to add spectacularity to the sets (such as in Karloff's observatory), and using props from earlier fantasy films including some of Sam Strickfaden's ornate

electrical apparatus leftover from his Frankenstein assignments.

The pseudo-scientific tone of the film is not immediately after the opening credits when a precautionary title alerts the audience that the photoplay is allegedly based on facts "whispered about in the cloisters of science," a charmingly naive statement considering some of the implausibilities to come.

In one bizarre episode, Lugosi photographs the still-opened eyes of one of Karloff's victims in order to record his dying vision. The next scene reveals Lugosi examining his hardware, a photographic arrangement of a human eye with Karloff's visage superimposed over the pupil.

Despite these glitches, the inevitable film remains a fine film and among its chief assets is John Costner's intelligent and well-constructed screenplay which astutely avoids the excessive comedy inclusions which marred his work in the MURDER OF EDWARD. This script progresses leisurely and is somewhat in its tasteless understatement; in fact, no other horror film since DRacula contains so much off-screen mayhem. Major characters are slain off-camera; the audience must read of Leah's death's character demise in the flash of a newspaper headline.

An combination of the shooting script shows the grunting, padding, and subtle alterations which Willizer could probably claim credit for. Scenes are sometimes re-arranged, often dialogue was added or deleted, not always to the advantage of the film.

In one particularly insensitive turn of the plot, as Ray spins on the heritage of Golem and Drue, he casually refers to six terrible representations of the saints seated on a nearby church roof. His mind evokes the callous figures as symbols of the six members of the African expedition. As he then individually studies his prey, he apathetically studies his disintegrator ray on the corresponding station. In the finished film, the frustrated viewer must "tune" of the disintegration in yet another newspaper shot, but the original script visually depicts the statue melting before a horrified crowd of spectators; a genuine defiantly raises his sword only to have it explode in his hand.

A similar scene in Africa remains in the final cut as Ray demonstrates the power of Radia X to his horrified safari boys by melting an enormous boulder into a boiling puddle. Perhaps fearing that the destruction of the church figures might be repeated in some circles as sacrilegious or, worse likely, repeating the scene as an excessive redundancy, it was relegated to another off-camera episode.

Some of the unseen carnage was more graphically delineated in the original script. In the early Pericles scenes, Ray faces

his own death in order to elude detection by killing a derelict of similar physical stature and planting his own identification papers on the body. Although the final release prints show Ray being the man from an outdoor station, the scene as originally intended shows the derelict being lured in Ray's hotel room, only to be dispatched by the touch of the scientist's lightning hand.

Crowd adds proved to be quite judicious, especially a scene showing Frankenstein begging a sleeping Rhine to save Clara's life. Costner specifies in his script that old silent footage from the studio library be used, but the use of such obvious stock shots would needlessly cheapen the overall look of the film. Also sketched, presumably for reasons of pacing, were one of two romantic episodes as well as a prolonged conversation between Stevens and Bert discussing Ray's scientific beliefs before arriving at the Desperado secretory. The dialogue in the original script miserably takes on an exasperatingly dated anti-lick tone directed at the actors in the African sequences. That, unfortunately, was laid down considerably in the final cut.

Significantly skewed in the course of the production was the elaborate special effects sequence in the first act as Ray's mountainous disintegrator. Ray's guests were to be treated to a spectacular "battle of the sun" scene as part of his demonstration. As described in the screenplay, a gigantic sun emerges from the nebula "seeming to revolve in the blackness of universal ether." Another sun looms into view.

"As the other star draws near, the surface of the sun becomes greatly agitated. Great fiery flames are raised. . . it shoots forth great fingers of fiery atmosphere as though to tear the enemy apart and the intruder collapses in kind. . . For a moment it looks as though the sun were about to be consumed but already the pull of the second sun is increasing. It is pecking on its way and our sun. . . begins to assume its natural spherical shape."

This sequence, which would have undoubtedly taxed the resources of the special effects department, was completely substituted and Ray's few less elaborate "tour of the universe" was substituted. Though obviously composed of miniatures, this footage, buoyed by Willizer's direction and Bernard Burton's astute film editing, conveys a such greater sense of awe and grandeur than any of the studio's vulgar and ordinary Flash Gordon anti-separates.

Eliminated also was much of Ray's crucial dialogue in his final confrontation with Clara. Willizer chose to play this scene for all its suspense and menace as Ray threatens her with his radioactive grasp. The scene as originally written depicts Ray



For the first time meeting back to his normal self, torn between his lust for vengeance and the slow re-awakening of his love for his wife. Gilroy's dialogue adds some badly needed pathos to the character's plight as Ruth moves towards a tender career, without loathing her, desiring only sensuality.

The lush characters in the screenplay is too much the loving, affectionate husband at the outset, his mental decline is more startling as the narrative progresses. When Ruth saves a child of blindness with a measured dose of Radium 5, Ruth comes down into a fit of ironic laughter. The finished film depicts Ruth as a half-mad person to begin with whose mental powers are slowly questioned even by his own mother. He is already close to being in the final scene, bitterly vindictive of his loved one, as played by Karloff, so unexpected that we is at once sympathetic toward his long-suffering wife. The dialogue rapidly points to Ruth's attitude as Ruth's final push to complete mental disintegration, but it is clear to all that Ruth's collapse was a foregone conclusion.

Hurler in the 1930's seemed to inherit Lon Chaney Sr.'s claim to be "The Man of A Thousand Faces" - his physical appearance changing radically from one film to the next - even in his relatively straight roles. As Ruth, meaning men Jack Pierce began his alibi a wig of curly, jet-black hair and a surname, Hurler contributed a solid performance but an appreciable detachment began to creep into his work in the ensuing decade as the secretary of horror roles took its toll on his integrity.

Bills relatively in his prime, Boris Lugosi's presence was obviously unsettling. Although his role as the mutant Dr. Seret was apparently a low-key supporting role (for he was added to the cast much later than Karloff), inconspicuously added with most of the classic line, his sinister, heavily accented delivery inserts some understated humor into the proceedings. During an African slave scene, Frankenstein (Lugosi's brother) of the dead doctors experiments yielded my great seconds that day, Lugosi, steadily marching on a globe of evidence, responds, "Merely proof that the sun is the mother of us all!"

After the wedding scene, he is called upon to remark to the Mad Scientist character, "I hope they will be happy," but Lugosi leaves the line with so much despair following that even his incoherent exchange elicits chuckles during most screenings. Although it is not one of his finest assignments - but by no means his worst - it is an entertaining performance.

A standout is the generally commendable supporting cast led by Frances Drake. A dark, stately beauty, the new husband, Griffith, trained actress had a busy career in the mid-1930s, playing opposite the likes of Cary Grant and Clark Gable. A Paramount contract player, she was in last year of the time, and was chosen as a last-minute substitute for Virginia Bruce in Carl Froese's classic *WALL TO WALL* for MGM only months earlier. Carl Laemmle negotiated for her services for an inflated price, the *HORROR* *WARRIORS*, but she was [along with co-star Frank Lawton] re-assigned to the *DAWN OF THE DEAD* etc.

Star treatment must also be accorded to John P. Fulton whose special effects became the center of the publicity department's advertising campaign. The *Universal Weekly*, the studio's newsletter to producers which left no stone unturned to publicize the company's latest wares, published gaudy, full-page ads under the banner "The Lustrous Men" in such large type, one might easily mistake it for the title of the film. Not inordinately elaborating the facts, or inventing new ones, the tabloid reported that *Radium*'s progress was such a closely guarded secret that the set was "completely closed off," the cast and crew were compelled to maintain a vigilant silence, and that daily production reports which were routinely issued in the studio press had ceased.

Carl Laemmle Sr.'s regular column which immediately attested the studio's notice of new releases like an overbearing proud parent, teasingly commented, "watch for the technical effects, especially in a certain scene which will be discussed all over the world," although it was not revealed exactly to which scene he was referring. The effect which gave Karloff's body its eerie phosphorescence reportedly took six weeks to perfect and entailed Boris Karloff as James Hahn, the scientist who is corrupted and destroyed by his scientific curiosity.

a system of light filters. However, since the characteristic glow does not appear in the original theatrical trailer or in stills of the film, it can be reasonably speculated that it was added artificially (the same process was used to even greater dramatic effect five years later on *Lon Chaney Jr. in THE WICK* *WITCHES*).

THE *DAWN OF THE DEAD* is not only a film of considerable merit, it is a truly entertaining film in the universal sense with its lively interplay between its two major stars, a respectable script, and judicious direction; but it falls just short of classic status. Director Milgrom and writer Gilroy are sufficiently talented craftsmen but slightly lack a romantic style. Part of the problem is that the material is too dated to be attractive science fiction and too modern to be a credible Gothic place. Gilroy's script changes settings too drastically and too often. Starting the film in New York, then to Africa, a quick return to New Orleans, and finally moving down to Paris; the picture has a rambling, slightly disjointed structure that is at odds with the head-in-the-tomb atmosphere of the best horror films. Its postapocalyptic claustrophobic intensity of a Jack Cardiff or a Henry Frankenburg. Milgrom gets bogged down in the mechanics of the plot but cannot seem to personalize the horror of science gone mad as James Whale did so well. Nevertheless, THE *DAWN OF THE DEAD* is a film of more than passing interest and essential viewing for connoisseurs of the macabre.

#### THE CASTING MAN

CAST: Boris Hurler (Dr. James Hahn), Bela Lugosi (Dr. Victor Seret), Frances Drake (Gloria), Frank Lawton (Donald Drake), Walter Kingsford (Sir Francis Stevens), Paul Ford (Lady Elizabeth Stevens), Louis L. Lomax (Oscar Hahn), John Carradine (Dr. Hargrave), David Haines (Frederick), George E. Stone (Chief of the Hunter), Paul Wadell (Monsieur Meyer), Boris Dr. Max (Gordon Meyer), Frank Reicher (Professor Melnikov), Lawrence Stewart (Master One Native Boy), Rita Redman (Tula Meyer), Don Sharkey (Gladys), Walter Hall (Deakins), Wendell (Jeff) Roy, Mary Schum (Attendant at Clinic), Ernie Adams, Walter Miller, Lloyd Whitlock, Edward Davis, Alphonse Bertelli, Daisy Bufford, Clarence Gordon.

In Edmund Gungor Production. Directed by Lambert Hillyer. Screenplay by John Gilroy. Original Story by Howard Hoggins and Douglas Dodge. Director of Photography: George Robinson. Art Director: Albert S. D'Agostino. Special Cinematography: John P. Fulton. Music Score: Franz Waxman. Film Editor: Bernard Butler. General Manager: Sound Supervisor: Gilbert Harland. Assistant Director: Alfred Stern. Technical Advisor: Ted Barr.

A Universal Picture. Released January 20, 1934. Running Time: 78 minutes.

The gothic look of the beginning of the film allowed Universal to blend the horror genre with science fiction.



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## CINEMACABRE

an appreciation of the fantastic

CINEMACABRE #6 contains feature articles on the Star Wars trilogy and the Strongman plus an in-depth interview with veteran character actor Henry Brandon. Also included is an interview with Dr. David and Mr. Hyde director Rouben Mamoulian, his and second reviews, and much more. 54 pages typeset, glossy paper, digest size with full color covers plus interior color as well. \$3.00 per copy or \$5.00 for a three-issue subscription payable to: George Storer PO Box 10005 Baltimore, Maryland 21284



THE SCARED STIFF GHOST BREAKERS  
 BY DEAN CHAMBERS  
 LARRY LAWRENCE IN PAROLE

While some areas of the silent cinema attempted to stir its limited narrative boards, most "ghost" writing studied the camera lens with ghoulish "documentary" explanations. House haunting was grossly blamed on a criminal who wore a scary disguise to give his manifestations some visual punch. After victims were sufficiently frightened, their nerves were confounded by the exposure of one person's methods and motive - generally greed. An adherent to this field format was THE SCARED STIFF, a 1914 specialty directed by Cecil B. DeMille, and usually plotted in conventional wealth-seeking fashion in residence was an identically titled stage play written by Paul Sloney and Charles M. Goddard. In 1933, Alfred Green directed for Paramount its adaptation, the new SCARED STIFF, starring Wallace Reid and Lila Lee.

The film begins in Kentucky where Warren Jarvis, played by Reid, is involved in a local feud. Lee is Maria Foreman, a Spanish aristocrat who wants to deliver her fiancero by converting some hidden gold in the castle of her late father. With the help of her cousin, Duke O'Grady, she obtains the place of its location in a private New York mansion. Also in New York, Warren comes up at his fiancée and when caught by the police hides in Maria's hotel room. He and his black bodyguard have him out about the castle and offer their services to demand it. In a similar turn, Maria suggests Maria onto the ship taking her back to Spain. Leaving white Duke and error, the "ghosts" are henchmen of the Duke, and is wounded and captured. Though lacking material resources, the castle has ancient magic and Maria is fired.

SCARED STIFF decided aimed to avoid reviews. Neither Maria, a white blackface comedian, had his premiere criticized for being a counterfeit black, but he was most of the acting forces. In his best Broadway moments, Larry Fogarty off the gang using a razor and laser plays tricks with the "ghosts," showing their spirit. Costing along on the money of his loved partner, specific Wallace Reid had a credibility for appearing in racing cars. Not in evidence here. His involvement may have been a replica of his infamous dog adoption. Private was Arthur Edmund Carewe, who played himself in the following year's remake of REID. Carewe is more familiar as one of the suspect doctors in ORDER 2 and the female companion of sculptor Ivan Igor in ORDER OF ME AND MARY. The corporate loss of Maria's home killed him in 1933, precipitating the first major hurricane recorded in Hollywood. His increased role Dorothy used the motion picture PRIDE to actively campaign against drugs. The critics were mostly kind to Lila Lee, and became the heroine of the first female cameo of DE ZILLA in 1930.

Also based on plays, the silent remake of DE ZILLA, from Victor Hatherly, and THE CAT AND THE CANARY, a Universal release, were both produced in 1937 and are regarded as the proto-cinema "werd mermaid" silents. In origin, there, and sensibility, THE SCARED STIFF was their contemporary, although it is the also-duplicated the same million of 1940 that some criticized civilization. The Melrose treatment had been adopted by Melrose Jackson who wrote with Lynn Starling, Arthur Hatherly Jr.'s 1938 production of CAT

AND THE CANARY when Paramount bought the rights from Universal while 20th Century-Fox was concurrently making the second and remake of DE ZILLA as a program with Lila Lugosi, Lionel Atwill, and the Russian Miss BROWNE. Paramount called out the red carpet for CAT by developing it as a showcase for Bob Hope. The update New York remake of its predecessor was moved in a Londoner swamped. Horror agreed with Hope, his greatest leading lady Paulette Goddard complemented his sleep, and the profits assumed enough black ink to fill a refinery. Paramount originally planned to release it as SCARED STIFFERS as a double feature. Another Melrose production, it was directed by George Marshall and the writer - now typewritten - was again Melrose Deane. The Spanish correction released the castle to an island off the coast of Cuba, then hospitable to Venice Louisa.

A violent electrical storm sweeps west of Manhattan. In a hotel, Mary Carter packs for her trip to Cuba, where she has inherited from her grandfather the deserted Castillo Melrose on Black Island. During the past 20 years, when terror Mary of the Cuban consulate, the visitors have lived to see don't. Another Duke, Marion Macdonald, proves Mary. Concerned about the sale of the castle, he must speak to her privately. At her door, she is startled by a mysterious but harmless Mary Kelly. An informant in the French David men, he tells underworld women to deliver Maria's cousin, Larry Lawrence, and lives with his black night Alex. Parole, the castle assistant, presents Mary with an anonymous \$30,000 check sent by an unknown person's body.

On his program, Larry initially embarrasses French by disclosing his language of the only laundry cabinet. Helping eventually, French wants to see his at Mary's Paris. Outside, Alex gives Larry a gun for protection. French confronts Parole, during the far selling the castle before Parole protests his. Henry caught in the cross-fire, Larry is mistaken for the murderer by an hysterical woman who relieves his distinctive scarf. He hides in Mary's hotel suite before the police arrive to search every one. While Larry conceals himself in a trunk, Mary shows the scarf from a very detective. Unaware of his identity, she permits the trunk to be delivered to the pier. Alex meets Mary and when they realize this, Alex gets looking for the trapped Larry. The trunk is loaded with would Mary's wife.

Parole is returning to Cuba as another passenger. Mary receives a death note ordering her to sail Black Island. While she distracts Parole, Larry swiftly escapes from the trunk. A newspaper story describes his of murder. Parole fired a different caliber weapon. Finding the death note, Larry decides to outguess Mary. Once owned by notorious slavers, the castle is repeatedly haunted by the spirit of a Don Santiago. In the dock, the phantom tries to kill Larry by dropping a fire bucket from above.

Powered in the inside of Mary's stateroom door is a wife bearing a death charge. Somebody looking outside is scared away by Geoff Montgomery, an American businessman living in Cuba when Mary met. He stabilizes the orange. Larry decides to visit the island first. In it exists an old Negro woman and her grandson. In a nightclub, Mary and Geoff meet Melrose's identical except for a wooden heir brother Francisco, and inquires into the circumstances of his brother's death. Mary plans to go to the island alone, leaving Geoff a message.



Reaching the island ahead of Mary, Larry and Alex visit the zombie mother's shack. She abuses Larry when he tries to see her. In the castle, they hear strange noise organ music. Tracking the source, they discover a portrait of Mary's father, the noble-silver ancestor, Maria Vassal Sebastian, and the cabinet containing her skeleton. From his cabinet rises the luminous apparition of Don Santiago, who casually disappears. For Larry and Alex, the organ does not work.

Meanwhile, Stefan berates Mary to the edge of the island. She swears silence at the zombie altar leaders' hot son. Hearing a chorus of metaphysical voices urging her to flee the castle, Mary sees the remaining zombie approach and retreats to Maria's shrine. Inside a small window, Maria watches her until the phantom succumb him. It is clear Mary is to see the portrait. Concealed in a suit of armor, the zombie attacks Larry and Alex. Holding a lit candle, Mary stumbles if momentarily by cooling downstates in Maria's long flowing black gown. The zombie crumbles into assault, but is restrained and controlled by the portrait.

Don Mario's portrait indicates a pertinent direction. Geoff arrives and someone steals his notebook. Struggling to rise from a broken where the phantom had despoiled him, Parado is delving of a brief sword. He has come to protect Mary, revealing the existence of a treasure and in his last breath, "Make . . . leaving men." The men are engaged figures in notes of music written on a wall. Conspiring with Mary, the organ depicts its soundst pitch down a secret passage with a lit lantern inside. Larry and Mary see a shadowy figure, but the figure who sees the killer emerge from behind another panel before he is shot.

The audience, Geoff, had been double-crossed by Parado and tried every means to cheat Mary out of her birthright to claim a whole new of silver in the island. After the second wrong action, a double trap comes from the role in the island. Mary, Larry, Alex and the recovered Francisco return to Havana in the restaurant. Larry proposes to Mary, who gladly accepts. What about Don Santiago? That, insists Francisco, was a real ghost.

I was cool to all but the castle action in *GHOST BRANNERS* when I first saw it at a very young age because I had been conditioned to think that a horror film had to be horrifying from start to finish. I was too immature to appreciate the subtleties of a story that needed to take the slow-and-steady course, beginning with subtle unease and building from there, although I recognize his legend and about some of his work is funny, I have never been much of a fan like you even when I try to shut out his politics. Filled

with fear, *GHOST BRANNERS* seemed to me to be a masterpiece - in the best horror comes to exploit the star. The film is not just a face as often misrepresents who think that specific actresses is enough to create an illusion of horror. Making his work less simple, Hope it further is one line than the combined East Side Kids were in all their misadventures.

This was one horror comedy where the straight parts were enough to sustain a totally serious shocker. Commercially, Larry Lawrence kept the story scenes without bringing from subliming to dead all. Side-cracks are something a hero can get away with if they are defenses as if the rays of punch he remembers in his defense. A creative humorist, Hope lives in story at his victims' misadventures of their stereotypes or preferences. Noting the realistic femininity of the story, which presented the actual New York police failure of 1963, Larry comments - "You like Basil Rathbone's giving a pretty . . . lovely world of girls and the dead, Alex is interested when Larry tells him, "You look like a blackout in a blackout." This keeps up, I'm going to have to point you white." The French Dual problem comes from an accusation where the south can be lighter than the scene - unless it swallows the lip of the offscreen scene.

Metaphorically crude, the race humor in *GHOST BRANNERS* is not violently tasteless. The indication of how black performers advanced was how stereotyping revised his degrees of conservatism, including layers of mean degradation and homogenizing a racial portrait. Stefan Faruch was a step above the writer hired-type minstrel comic, followed by Willie West, who soon his shows a little more attractively. In the *MORRIS MURDER* of 1932, sweet Willie was known by his early descent violence of "Love M' Girl," playing a character with the implausible manner of a clown. *GHOST BRANNERS* was a promotion for West, who earned the admiration of Hope. Written as a parody of minstrelsy, the things that aroused Alex's ethnic ruffians had some legitimacy and Larry poured his race sign off these conditions, treating him as a handicapped, unequal partner.

Few of Alex's routines are a hindrance and more often he is, or tries to be, helpful. When Larry goes to meet Frenchy, it is Alex who anticipates the possible need of the gun, while trying to force Larry from the trunk, he is mentioned about his previous actions by a cop. Kibbling behind willowens, Alex says he is an ex-convict with a Polish for legend. Naturally, the cop believes him. A drunk who hears Larry speaking from the town credits Alex with ventriloquism. It is Alex who informs Larry via the messenger that he is off the murder track. Larry trusts Alex enough to get his guard Mary's coin while she is in bed, and the shadowy figure who frightens her is Alex, there to protect her. The act of involuntary manslaughter on his part kills Geoff and sends Larry, Mary, and Francisco.

Alex is certainly more appealing than the zombie and his equally creepy sonner. Halfway rate sympathy, although Larry unduly maligns mostly black women - a stereotype staple - when he cries, "Wait a minute, Aunt Ethel!" The type of creature that the zombie represents is mocked politically. "You are then walking around like a zombie," says Geoff, "following orders. Not seeing, not hearing." "Like Democrats!" asks Larry.

The trunk is the only night-gag prop. Through a hole within the mouth of a travel silver-girl, Larry is able to pose a giggling

finger. I wonder why the camera - who often see *FIGHT* in less suggestive things - passed it? "Thank Alex Deane" would make a good *Belmont* headline and Larry's knee broke the juicer against another drunk and he builds his case to make that trunk talk.

*GHOST BRANNERS* was the first movie after *WHITE ZOMBIES* to depict zombies in some proper historical dimension, keeping its single zombie in perspective as the definitive phenomenon. Described as colored, its actors were played by white-blinded Caucasian actors Virginia Triacca and the zombie was Noble Johnson in one of his surface characterizations. The only two guard the castle from trespassers, unaware that Larry, Mary, and Alex have killed Francis. The zombie certainly scared the others. He holds, yet not so completely mindless as to be non-sensational. Here frightening than some stagger-footed Monogram extra shrouded from the beauty at midnight, he is a chucky agghast with sunken cheeks, a jutting nose that features thin eyelids and shakily, alert pupils. When it benefits his aim, the zombie can move fairly fast and exhibits some ingenious blowing.

An additional "fence" operation, Don Santiago does nothing after his life-end except ask off. His solidity or lack of it must stay also his emotional region. He has to lift the curtain lid to raise his head, yet his torso passes through one side of it with no trouble. Santiago himself is only the faintest scheme of a person within a moving cloak of phantasmagoria. Even if artificial glass are a stock setpiece trick, this gives him the aura of genuine ectoplasm captured on film.

Soundology creates a pair of deep personality in *Heleno*/*Francisco* and *Mary/Maria*. Francisco breaks the image and the purpose of *Francisco* while Mary is helping against the zombie until Maria suddenly isolates, briefly watching again three-dimensionally so Mary assumes the mantle of her ghost. An earth-anchored mother, the zombie, for an instant, is moved by his own comprehension of the result when her creature creates a product of the uncomfortable supernatural. As if everything had been preordained, Maria's head in Alex starts in motion the deciphering of a subtle yet explicit the gathering of everyone in a tight space for their hour of truth. The value of the island is within its wall and Geoff's demise sends his deep into it while his soul, presumably, feels even further.

Responsible for the excellent noir cinematography were Charles Levy and Theodore Soderlund. News Center and Robert Lerner designed the stylish art direction, and Faricat Doucet devised some spectacular interiors work. The portentous storm riffs fell from Heaven as if giant wings or roller blades of the *LOST CITY* were causing it. The skyscrapers are cement timbers stolidly weathering onslaught from savage shots of energy sizzle enough to detonate, touching some buildings without actually hurting them. In the type of classical claustrophobia that usually completes people, the blackout only provides anxiety and background crime in the planning and perpetration. The castle interior is a merry palace of decomposition, still-stately architecture where mellowing dark covers every space of space unrelieved by traces of light. Specimen and experimentally sustained, the chambers allow permission to turn concept on long legs.

A Belgian scene poster from Bob Ross's *THE GHOST BRANNERS*.





Top: Secret passageways become comic opportunities for Merlin and Lewis from SCARED STUFF; Bottom: The trunk becomes the only coals prep used in SCARED STUFF.

A handsome, pale, huge and God-gifted guy such out of their appearance, the heritage of such being the antithesis of their image. Considering a native son, where, as Apple Pie his home town was in the heart of the country, the American of the West, New York, exhibits a fragile exterior, where his disposition is not as strong as we worked into the continuity. Being a sweet-toothed (Enter Williams' definition in a quick biting way), she covers herself with a trim and snort. Hearing to the sound is a very convincing evidence to her. As the film progresses, she is seen in the center strains, ripping away a long strip of fabric (we'll come up the scene of one thing, suggesting a visual memory of sexual satisfaction). While Bill, who died in 1962, continued his acting career, she continued to work in the film industry. In 1968, she (his last), WEISBERG GROSS, cast her opposite Milton Berle in a Latin (American) radio (show). Anthony Quinn, whom she had dated for years and Francis, Paul Lukas and Fannie, and the film industry. She was the first lady film actress. Her father's star is "HILTON'S".

It is debatable whether *SHOGUN* actually started the sonic trend of World War II as its theme, through a major contribution to the drums, was only around for a few scenes. Two Monogems, a kind of the *SHOGUN*, set in the Samurai, and the somewhat situated *SHOGUN*, named Jeff, played by Norman Macdonald. In *SHOGUN* the *SHOGUN*, another Manhattan in the Caribbeian adventure, one supporting character was a reformed (but still) dangerous man created/generator of the indignation of a famous Pacific nomenclature instead of Virginia.

Don Martin and Jerry Lewis have a too-beautiful, wistful Delany wrote (with Herbert Lewis) the Wallin production of *SCARED* (1971), a half-wast, almost comically identical 1963 remake of *SCARED TO DEATH*, also directed by George Marshall. Larry Lawrence had made his living with his voice as Don Martin because nightclub singer Larry Todd Lewis assumed the Alke role as inept husband Myke Meyer, experiencing some of Lawrence's difficulties. Although the adaptation of comic strips from one film to another was surface comedy, *SCARED* appears also beside the funeral, spookier Hayslet because of the way Larry re-writes (John "Democrat" and now "New York's" *Impresso*) the script.

The murky cinematography of *SEANIS STUFF* has been oppressive but controlled. *SEANIS STUFF* is so dark that most of it must have been lit with mudgo pots to save electricity. The store that began Moore's film was a symphony of wug, creeple, and cop. The new one is hardly a glass in a mudhole. Jerry indicates the

degree of pain by bringing in a wet kitten and puppy. He is in trouble with a hood named Shorty because he has been cozy with Rosie Gonzalez (Gloria Malone), a brass-bandist woman whose other boyfriend, Jimmy, a sailor, has been killed for a rise. Not satisfied in the dissolute life, he and her find a bundle of magazines piled like a mountain of straws when it rains so a girl on the road, who has been a soap opera reviewer, calls him Shorty, asking to see Larry. Rosie Gonzalez hopes to see him.

Mary Carter is now Mary Carroll, played by Linewith Scott. She is glassed in the way one might expect Barbara Bain to be a wire person, but she is not identically wireframe like the Poulettes Goddess. Black Island is now Lost Island. Pamela is Corinne, passantly portrayed by George Delany, the late father of *Lawrence* Mickey. Aaron Madewies is Aaron Caruso and it is this brother and wife's a sustenance.

When Larry learned where Myron has gone, he goes to look for his hotel. A mere visual check tells him that Myron is in the city. Larry feels like he has met multiple personalities, doubting as Myron's conscience in a silence in front him when Myron gets old feet about the appointment. Myron, he discovers when Myron and his wife introduce him in the room, is a man who works with the big labor. George shows him the room, and Myron is surprised to find that the room is the room he is looking for. There are two more of the second Mary. He gets trapped in the truck. And Mary, joined by Myron, rescues him at the pier. Myron spots one of Myron's boys looking for him and it is he and gets whisked away to the hotel to take a short class, discovery of the information.

[illegible][illegible]

The collage deviates completely from GHOST BREAKERS with a surprise homage to *Satan's Six*. Myron opens a new secret panel and behind it is something so shocking that he, Larry, and Mary fall all over themselves as they escape. Above two skeletal bodies are the living heads of another nemesis pair: those Road-sterz King Cobby and . . . uh-huh. . . Bob Hoag!

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# PRELUDE TO TERROR

THE EVOLUTION OF MUSIC  
IN EARLY HORROR FILMS  
by jim doherty

Illustration: 1988

To this day, when listening to the opening of Act III of Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake, it is often difficult to think of it being aurally its original Soviet context, as this score has had it ingrained in his head since those early days when his parents first let him watch the late show, that this was none other than one of those PAVLOVA. Borrowing classical music to enhance the mood of films was a carry-over from the silent world era, and DRACULA, of course, was only one of the forerunners.

The evolution of music in early sound horror films really fits into the overall picture of film scoring of that period, and therefore a brief look at the history of film music in general might help place this study of early horror scores in a clearer perspective.

In the earliest days of the cinema, piano music was used basically to cover up the noise of the projector. The musician could play whatever he felt like - from classical excerpts to popular tunes of the day. Of course, at this time there were no set rules about what kind of music should be played with what scenes, and it was only the more enterprising musicians that actually tried to match the music to what was happening on the screen. (For instance, exciting music could be used for chases, and tender strains for the kisses and clutches.) In time, special collections were published which contained specially selected classical excerpts and/or specially composed pieces, arranged by composers (Purcell, Bartók, Wagner, Appassionata, etc.), from which the musician could select appropriate pieces to form his "score." Giuseppe Rocca and Leo Generali were two composers who wrote numerous accounts of such generic score music. Although there were rare instances of scores being composed or composed for specific films (Gottlieb's silent-era original score for the 1908 film L'AMANTISSIMO DU SAC DE GUINÉE, for example), film music was generally a do-as-you-like trial and error proposition.

The task also tended to be simple or complex a score for a particular film. Although the job of assembling a score was originally left up to the musical directors of the theaters, it became more and more common for studios to sign on their musical directors who would prepare scores to be used by the theaters showing the film. One early example of this was ERIC A. NOLAN (1910), a combination of original music, classical excerpts, and American folk tunes woven into the first project by Joseph Carl Bial and the film's director O.E. ROSS. Two silent-era fantastic films which specially arranged scores were THE TALE OF SAGADA (1914, Mortimer Wilson) and METROPOLIS (1926, Gottlieb's suggestion).

In the late 1920's, amidst the diversity of opinions on musical scoring, some were helping with it more confusion and yet another question: would there be any music in sound movies?

It is during this period of musical confusion that many of the classic horror films came to life. It is why you can take the film made in the same year and find a multi-tracked original score in one (such as KING KONG and only music and title music in another (MYSTERY OF THE MEXICAN MUSEUM). It was a period of experimentation; a time when new musical ideas fought against - and the same time coincided with - silent movie traditions. This platform of musical opinions is well exemplified in the early horror film, many examples of which will follow. A couple of commonplace scoreuses will be KING KONG and THE BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN. Still, where scores have already been analyzed at great length in this magazine by BILL LITVIN. Instead this article will spotlight some of the lesser-recognized early scores, and their contributions to the development of film music.

As a starting point, let us look briefly at two of Universal's most famous horror films: DRACULA and FRANKENSTEIN. The latter film, except for some classical excerpts heard as recitatives (or "severer") music during a concert hall scene, contains no music

except for an edited excerpt from Tchaikovsky's Swan Lake, which attempts to set some sort of mood during the opening titles. (Swan Lake was to become a favorite Universal anthem, playing in its entirety in THE BLUE HORSE, THE SECRET OF THE BLUE ROOM, and THE HUNTER.) The who titles are accompanied only by bells tolling the hour. (A subsequent release added a musical finale.) This is a perfect example of producers' fears of music in talking pictures. They thought music would confuse the audience, who would wonder where it was coming from in the middle of a scene, so they left it out, unless it was justified by some on-screen source like a bells, or phonograph, or orchestra.

FRANKENSTEIN is another typical example. It has an extremely atmospheric main title (written for the film by Bernard Herrmann) incorporating a sinister muted brass opening, a mysterious waltz section with softening strings, and a final section that sounds like a national funeral march, with a lighter string song standing in for the playing of a clock tower bell. Mann also composed the music for the movie's "mother" two major actresses in the field - BECKY (1930) and BECKY (1931) of THE MEXICAN (1931) - both of which utilize the same music and title music and contain no background scoring. FRANKENSTEIN's and title music is a score selection called "Grand Appassionata" by Giuseppe Rocca, quite possibly from one of his published volumes of silent score accompaniment. Once again, though, the main body of the film is unscoring.

The same is true of METROPOLIS (1926, RUDOLPH ABEL) and THE TALE OF SAGADA (1914). The former film uses an orchestral version of Bach's Locata and Fugue in a string to establish a heavy, serious mood over the opening titles. The film features some music as Dr. Jekyll gives the organ and again during the music hall sequence, but the film is devoid of dramatic background scoring. The back place is emphasized to close the film on a properly quiet and somber note, but then changes into a brisk, energetic march with a hint of a foreign origin picture. Possibly the reasoning behind this was to bring up the audience's spirits after all the gruesome events just witnessed. SAGADA OF 1914 SOUNDS is a study of similar non-dramatic handling of the music. It uses a lush yet serious tropical theme filled with distant sounds, swelling for the opening and closing titles, only to be followed by an end credit up-tempo fox trot straight out of a 1930's dance hall.

Around this time, a film which for reasons unknown is generally regarded as a milestone in early genre scoring appeared: the Hal Roach Brothers' silent comedy score, WHITE CRIMINAL (1929). Abe Roach is given the credit for this score, but it must be pointed out that he did not compose any of the music. He selected and edited the main body of the score from a variety of stock library cues. Many of them are of the generic variety, called from silent era accompaniment books, with titles like "Incolored Symphonies" by Ruggieri or "The Star" by Bach. These selections are mostly dated, and today remind one of the sort of nonsensical hyperactivity found in "Little Rascals" comedies, as used today as supposedly clever accompaniment for old silent movies. Only a few cues rise above this level of musical silliness: a slanting through-out the film. One of them is a stock five note theme called "Death of a Great Red Warrior" by Robert Miller and early sound film composer Hugo Haasman (who scored Fritz Lang's 1927 version of KING OF KONG). The cue is most probably lifted from his score for the 1925 version of THE UNDISCOVERED COUNTRY, but more surprisingly, as a sinister muted brass motif for Bela Lugosi and the over-popular close-up of his hypnotic eyes. The use of the happy additional "Lugosi in the Lead" is also employed with great effectiveness.

The only two original cues composed for the film are a Spanish dance (by Maxie Cugat) for the scene in which the hero dances









**SOLE (1939).** Max Steiner's theme at once establishes the otherworldly aura of the little character She.

Over the world's tender the inhabitants of Eternity unconscious with the "gas of peace." Over shots of the graceful skydivers, a solo trumpet plays a seductive theme: a reminder of the happiness of war, and at the same time, a farewell to its reign. The orchestra starts playing a quickstep theme of hope which substitutes in an extended figure as the scene shifts to the "hells Over the world" headquarters at home, where Joan Cabot delivers his outline for the revitalization of the world. Under the latter part of his speech begins the rhythmic pounding of the music for the montage depicting the reign of civilization, which covers sixty-six years of rebuilding. Excavations and construction take place, automation replaces manpower, huge new modern machines supplant older, cruder models. For the next seven dialogue-free minutes, the music paints a portrait of man's rise, culminated finally out of the dark ages of despair and into the light of a new civilized world. The music is divided into three major sections, each with the same underlying, unifying rhythmic pounding from the tympani and/or piano. It is the unifying thread between the sections.

The music starts out heavy and pounding, with much emphasis on percussion (including tuned bells) and brass chords, but with each successive section it becomes slightly sweeter and hopeful. The timbre is subtle; the shifts are replaced by the brighter sounding xylophone, and overall, the music takes on a more melodic texture. The climax is reached with a restatement of the fanfare that began the sequence. The effort of this entire musical sequence is that of ardently climbing a steep hill. It begins to level off near the top, and the going gets a little easier. Finally the summit is reached, and one can look back in triumph at the hard work it took to get there. This is quite fitting, as the final shot of the sequence is an aerial view of the new Eternity in the year 2036.

After this extended musical tour de force, the film resumes business as usual. The final scene, in which scientists try to fire off the first manned rocket to the moon before an angry mob of protesters stops the launch pad.

"The Attack on the Moon Gun" bursts forth, with the brass excitedly starting a four-note theme very similar to the opening of Bach's Fifth symphony (2nd or 3rd movement) over a battery of percussion and underlying strings. The orchestra winds through several variations of the theme before bursting it beneath a stampede of blaring brass chords and gale-like strings. But the theme is always there, amidst the fray, sometimes only in percussive form, beat out on brass drums. It emerges triumphantly at the end of the cue in the form of exultant chords of brass and strings, accompanied by frenetic percussionists whose flailing arms strike away at cymbals, gongs, and different gilded bells. It reaches an abrupt, breathtaking climax as the moon gun fires off its deadly rocket space.

After the deafening roar of the rocket subsides, the scene shifts to an observatory where Oswald Cabot and Raymond Parsworthy watch the rocket's flight against the stars in an enormous telescopic reflector. A calm mood is established by a solo part flowing piece in which the string section takes the starring role, assisted by members of the brass and winds. Although it is a pleasant enough melody, it is repeated several times with little variation, and does little to capture the strength of earlier famous philosophical dialogue. Wells himself wrote in a 1936 letter to Silas that he was not sure the music fully captured the exaltation of "the marching song of a new world of conquest among the stars and stars." It is not clear whether Wells was referring to this final version or to some earlier, even less exalted, incarnation. The melody does finally begin to increase slightly in intensity, through the infusion of more brass, as Cabot delivers the sci-fi mix of race classing songs. Cabot concludes with, "It is this, or that. All the universe, or nothingness. Which shall it be, Paradise, or Hell? Which shall it be?" On that cue, a large chorus triumphantly erupts into these song movements of "Which Shall It Be?" accented

by trumpet fanfares, before closing the film with a full choral and orchestral fortissimo chord.

**THINGS TO COME** can be regarded as one of the earliest instances of a composer being given so much consideration during the pre-production stages of a film. Silas was an award from the start, to grow with the film, and let his ideas converge with those of the other personnel. Some sequences were scored first, and edited to match the music.

Silas approached the scoring of **THINGS TO COME** from a rather broad standpoint, choosing to envision entire sequences in a particular atmosphere, instead of concentrating on specific incidents. It is a method which works for this film as well as Steiner's use of leitmotifs in the most dangerous game and so on.

The point is, there really is no set way to score a film. This was learned in the early days of scoring, and continues to apply today. Each film has its own requirements. What works for one might not work for another. But the destination is the same regardless of the route taken. It helps create a mood, or trigger a certain emotional response in the viewer. A great deal is owed the early composers and producers who believed in the emotional power of serious background scoring in films, and fought to prove their beliefs. It was they who helped define the purpose of film music and create an art form from out of what was once arbitrarily placed bangles to camouflage the unsightly pocket of the projector.

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The author wishes to extend special thanks to: A. Nancy Rosenthal of ASCAP, Mr. G. Roger Newman, and Randall Larson.



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ROBOT MONSTER

THE ROBOT VS. THE ZEPHYRUS





nightmare - can become adjusted to by the audience watching, "on well, it's only special effects!" The film features two fine supporting performances from such actors as Kenneth Marshall, Jay Stockwell, and Robert Emhardt, plus one of the most remarkable, simultaneously funny and horrific scenes ever in which the baby screams a mile truck, and we see the milk that's spilling out the back slowly turn red (brought to the blood under the door in the LEGWAD MANS).

IT'S ALIVE also establishes a couple of Cohen trademarks. Cohen believes that terror begins in the home. (See, for example, his film BONE was GAIL RAY FILM TERROR as MURDER KILLS HOMEWARD where Vogel's mother terrorizes an actor who is murdered by strangling to rape and murder an executive's wife if he doesn't come back with the ransom money, but the executive decides to leave town with his lover instead.) The family is a very important, central unit in most Cohen films, but it is also the source of much anguish and terror as the people living together engage in unexpected slays of their personalities. Another aspect of Cohen's willing is that he firmly believes that a good is more than a collection of incidents. His characters change in the course of the story because the events they encounter alter their viewpoint.

That is amazingly apparent in IT'S ALIVE with Frank's gradual acceptance of his new "son." Initially repulsed and seeking to kill it like any sane man, Frank comes to accept his monstrous son and see things from the infant's point-of-view. Everyone was expecting to see a horror movie, but Cohen's idea of people coming together to hunt is down. While the baby's actions have been far from sympathetic, audience empathy is nonetheless aroused when we see that the creature is hungry, cold, and frightened. Frank accepts the responsibility and accepts the child as his own, including its and protective it.

In turn, progress from the hospital to the wheel of his brother, coming ever closer to the family home, while quarantined trapping through the darkness school was far an uncle who began to wonder why suddenly, but we see the lights on. As Cohen recalled, "when we ran the picture at UCLA for Arthur Knight's classes, he said, 'this is obviously a low budget picture because nobody ever turns the lights on.' This film is a big favorite of Spielberg's. He's told me he loved the picture, he picked up a few elements which you see later in E.T. A lot of people have borrowed scenes from the picture. There's a big steal from it in a picture called PROPHET, about an ecological monster that was going around in the swamps. Imagine that, a good director like John Frankenheimer stealing from me!"

The film ends with one of Cohen's best Frank to drop the baby so that he can shoot it. Instead, the father hugs the baby at the official he considers responsible and the kid becomes clad with bullets. Said Cohen, "I left the end the way it is because I like that when they shoot it, it's like a PRIMER. It's like the KISS deal. We never knew whether he fell in it or purpose or whether it was an accident. You're not sure whether he destroyed the bridge because he realized that he had done something wrong or whether he accidentally falls on the guinea."

He didn't tell you to be afraid, he knew the baby was going from himself because of fear, because he knew the baby was going to be shot, or because the man he was throwing it in it is the one who is really responsible because he was the doctor. Remember, there's a scene in IT'S ALIVE where they talk about the pharmaceutical guy - the guy who says the baby is dead, he says it's an accident. We don't want the baby captured alive; we want it destroyed so there can't be any more offensive decision as to what caused this. Whether it was birth control pills or some indication that the woman was having, it would be much better if no one could ever defend and defend it.

Basically, what you have there in the pharmaceutical people who are selling people potentially dangerous products. Usually, we were very aware of our time because it turns out that there are famous kids control pills that have been detected causes damage and deformities to children and cancer in mothers. There's another device - a shield, and if you ever used this shield, you should go in and take a medical examine. That proved that the company knew the shield was dangerous, but they kept years and still insist that it was safe. There's definitely a connection between IT'S ALIVE and THE STUFF, where people are selling this killer bee cream to the public even though they know it is deadly. If people are buying it, that's their problem, isn't it?"

However, IT'S ALIVE also had a different kind of scandal. Warner Brothers didn't have much money in it. (Initially a studio doesn't try too hard on a picture they don't have too much faith in. Actually, they'd gotten to 1974 and they had THE EXCISIT at the same time, and all their effort went into THE EXCISIT. The really good thing about it was that a woman called them saying they were making so much money with THE EXCISIT they couldn't believe it.)

"So they just kind of put IT'S ALIVE aside, put it out on drive-in, and forget about it. I was saying that the campaign was fairly. It didn't tell you what the picture was about; it didn't mention the baby or anything. They were afraid that the baby idea would turn the audience off. I said, well, if that's the case, we should never have made the picture. That's what the picture is about. You can't sell the picture to gay guys, but people oranges and give them apples. That means apples. No matter what you got, tell them what you got. If they want to see it, they've got to see, and if it was worth making the picture in the first place, you should be able to tell them what it's about and they should come. But you've got to tell them what it's about."

"So finally a new administration came into Warner Brothers - the old people left and I went back to the new people. There was a guy named Arthur Hanson, and he'd been with Universal when Universal



The original advertising campaign for IT'S ALIVE.

old a picture called WILLARD, and he'd come up with the WILLARD campaign, and he was now head of advertising for Warner Brothers. He ran the picture and he thought it was a good picture. He called me up and told me, 'I'd like to see your picture like your sound me to, and I thought it was a very good picture. I looked at the original campaign and I thought it was terrible. I think you got the most end of the stick and it's gonna see if I can help you.'

"Then Jerry Seinfeld, who was head of distribution and booking pictures, said this was a good picture, a good thriller. He looked at the previous history of the film and he thought that the picture hadn't really been released, so they test marketed the picture with a new campaign and it did very well. Then they said to me, 'we're going to put this picture in six months before we want to hold it open. We have a specific time we want to open it. And that scared the hell out of me because I figured in six months time there guys could be filmed and I'd have to deal with another administration.'

"And that's the way it was. We waited, and we opened the picture in '79, and that was three years after the picture had originally opened, and the picture took off. For two weeks, it was the number one picture in America. It ended up doing about \$16 million, a picture from Warner. That was, of course, in the world market, U.S. and foreign. In the meantime, the picture was the Academy Film Festival (Out of Film category), but that didn't impress Warner Brothers. Nothing impressed the original people. It wasn't until after they'd left that I was able to get the picture bought back to life. That goes to show, you never should give up on a picture."

Since the first IT'S ALIVE proved so successful, it was almost inevitable that it would spawn a sequel, which it did in 1978 with IT'S ALIVE 2 (aka IT'S ALIVE PART II). The first film ended with a secret that another monstrous baby had been born, but this sequel offers clues of the terrifying plans. John Ryan reappears as Frank Devlin, now determined to save the kids and save them. He joins forces with scientists/doctor's Henry and Fred (Andrew Duggan and Eddie Continental). Recurring character Halley (John Halley), a cop whose wife died on the operating table giving birth to her mutated baby.

Somewhat in the middle are the Scotts (Frederic Forrest and Kathleen Lloyd) who admit that their kid isn't very well behaved but who aren't ready to see it blow apart by the national guard. Despite the good cast, the film suffers from using too much of the killer infants - their obvious phobias becoming more apparent in the sequel - and from having to set up situations where these relatively defenseless babes can get close enough to their loved targets to attack.

Cohen agreed that "the less you see, the better off you were. In the second picture, we felt that if people came back and paid another five dollars, they had the right to see a little bit more, but I was wrong about that. It was much better if the babies were seen less. So one more of the babies in the second picture and we should have had more."

"But I just felt we couldn't have them come back and pay five dollars again and not show them the baby the second time. Now



Makus artist Rick Baker poses with his creation - the son-of-a-baby from Larry Cohen's IT'S ALIVE.

see, the first clue it was logical because the baby was born and escaped from the hospital, and the whole picture is the father looking for it and he never sees it until the end. So all right, that's OK. There's a logical reason not to show it.

"Now in the second picture, about a third of the way through the picture, people come to a house where the bodies are kept in a basement in cages and are being raised. They're in captivity, and there's no reason in the world that you can justify not showing them, because if I don't show 'em, it would be a total cheat. So I was trapped into the fact that logically, in dealing honestly with the audience, I would have to show them. I tried to keep it brief, but in showing the babies, you have some of the magic out of the creation because the great thing is what do they look like?"

IT LIVES AGAIN contains hints that the babies might be the next step up on the evolutionary ladder. The fact that two of them are named Adam and Eve given their religious overtones as well as suggesting they may be the progenitors of a new race. However, the religious concepts of IT LIVES AGAIN pale in comparison to COLO TOLD ME TO (aka OOOOHHH(1916), in which aliens from outer space (where else?) impregnate two virgins and produce a hybrid race. (The same sort of situation was explored in John Wood's The Mission Children, which was filmed as KILLER IN THE BEACH.)

However, unlike VILLAGE, Cohen counts the book for its religious significance. Said Cohen, "My theory was that if a superbeing was born on Earth, like Clark Kent, let's say the Superman story is treated realistically... So this kid is being reared through wells, he can fly, he has superpowers and everything. He goes to church every Sunday and he hears about Jesus Christ. He loves he can do all these things that no other human can do, so he has to figure he's Jesus Christ reincarnated, right? Misinterpreted because we're raising him to owe him, he's not going to take him an alien from another planet. What is he going to think? The whole culture here, the whole of western civilization, is waiting for the Messiah to show up. So an alien who supposedly becomes involved in his own side that he's God."

"His mother is a virgin, following the prophecy. She's convinced that he's God. We really didn't have time to explore all the details of it, but it's a very interesting theory that an alien being born on Earth could very well believe himself for Jesus because the prophecies of Jesus' coming fit in so closely with what an alien might end up being, looking like us, and yet being all these superior powers."

In this particular case, there were two of them. Tony Lombardo had all the religious trappings, and the other guy (Michael Lynch) had all the traits that were damned because they were going to have a wedding at the end, and that's really a crazy idea." The character played by Lynch has a virgin in place of a wife, even as that he can make with his brother. However, Lynch is totally disturbed and has been causing some people to turn into screaming wies, when caught, can only explain their actions by saying, "God told me to do it."

The film did not perform well under its original title, so the film was out and released under the nonsensical title of OOOO, among the scenes out were scenes which were clearly explained Tony Lombardo's existence in having children, and a hearing between the would-be Russian and twelve owners on Wall Street. The original title of the film, ALON DECEMBER, had to be scrapped when the film that later was released as SHIPWRECK DAWGDOOD advertised with that title first. But they, the title would have given away the solution to the mystery behind the apparently motiveless killings too soon.

Religious symbolism is strewnover throughout even to having one of the main characters betray the alien, Michael Phillip, to the police and to his having a flashback scene where his head is a favorite scene of Cohen's was the one where the executives (Globe) refused to follow him or not. One of them says, "What kind of God is it that sends a monster?" Another man replies, "Well, read the Bible. You'll know about a God that sends a monster." For crying out loud, he murdered almost the entire human race because he got angry one day and showed everybody. He made this



Here John Span, the father of the monster/baby, cannot decide whether to shoot his son or not - IT'S ALIVE.

one sacrifice? He killed the first-born of every Egyptian; He made this one and he made the son."

Said Cohen, "They (the executives) also looked at all the gods in Greek mythology and all the gods going at her back as you can in all the different primitive cultures and everything. Religion always seems to have something kind of all virgin birth, rising from the dead, changing into some kind of an animal, changing into some other kind of form. There's always a lot of killing and stinking and stuff that doesn't believe in them. You don't believe in them? God is a very violent creature, and in OOO TOLD ME TO, we said that."

Even before the outrageous climax, the showdown between the two brothers, COO TOLD ME TO has some fairly interesting scenes which often elude exploitation. Two scenes stand out. A confrontation between Tony Lombardo and Sandy Williams as a sniper who couldn't believe because "God" told him to, and a chilling scene where a man explains why he killed his family, quietly stating: "He's done so much for us - I just thought it was time we did something for him."

Additionally, another subplot is added to the film because both these characters come off as being gay. In fact, homosexual critic Robin Wood has interpreted the whole picture to be about "the revelation of bisexuality within Christian patriarchal culture." Which seems to be a load of George's kidneys. However, it is true that there is an obvious conflict between the oppressed (Lombardo) and his Catholic upbringing and the unrepentant (Sandy) in the brother fight. In a huge, Lillian's situation does not prevent his first having both a wife (played by Sandy Bernal) and a lover (played by Deborah Peiffer).

Commented Cohen, "I guess you can find a gay subplot in any movie you want to find it. Actually, when we making the picture, it occurred to me after casting Sandy Williams - I am gay and whether gay in another part - there were all well-known actors. Sandy Williams had won the Tony award for a (Chicago) role; the other guy who played the man who killed his children was a well-known Broadway and stage actor, and they were coming off as being gay. I said to myself, somebody's going to see that this picture is all about homosexuals, and sure enough, just a few weeks ago and somebody said it. I thought that as long as it was going that way, we would have it that way. Maybe that's why I did that thing at the end about the alien wanting to mate with his brother."

It's interesting to note that Lombardo does not feel released until after the destruction of his brother. Similarly, in IT LIVES AGAIN, the relationship between Eugene and John Scott is strained, largely because of Eugene Scott's willful. He's asked his wife to give up her career in favor of his and has been very demanding, which suggests that their mutual crushing might be a revelation of the tension of their marriage. Interestingly, like "the father" in Cronenberg's film being a manifestation of a person's rage. The couple cannot even bear to touch one another until they achieve catharsis at the end when they wash all their child in the brother fight. The sacrifice somehow brings the pair together as they were united in each other's rage.

Again, both these films are about disruptions within families and about estrangement. Lombardo has a brother he never knew how about, and John having disowned him, rejects his utterly. The Scotts find their son's child frightening and repulsive.

- THE WINDS OF PAIN deals with a character, David, played by Michael Moriarty, who has been estranged from society and finds in Quakerland, the giant winged serpent of the title, the means to gain power, wealth, and respect by threatening not to reveal the monster's whereabouts unless his demands are met.

"In general, I like to make a picture that is different, that hasn't been before," Cohen explained. "I guess there are some movies about werewolves like the Chip, maybe even flying monkeys invading the Chrysler building, but I don't see any movie involving the character that Michael Moriarty played. The monster itself was really secondary to him. His relationship, what happened to him, his relationship to the monster and to the police, his power trip. It was really more about a disturbed man a giant bird. They both have the initial A."



Terrified doctors rush a newborn monster/baby into an incubated crib in a scene from **IT LIVES AGAIN**.

"Actually, G was the first title on the script, when I wrote the script. Then I made the picture and other people said, 'Well, G doesn't sound right. People don't know what it means. Is it a new line to put out, or is it a cue for an actor to go on stage, or is it a name like you get an idea?' They felt it was too ambiguous a title. So David Abbott, who was one of the founders of the picture, suggested we call it **THE WINGED SERPENT**. Actually, we probably should have called it **THE SPOT SERPENT**. **THE WINGED SERPENT** is a hard thing to say.

"Anyway, I'm happy, and was a pay in advertising, came up with that title so that's what they were going to call it at the Cannes Festival for foreign sales. Meanwhile, I made a deal for domestic distribution with United Film Distribution Company and Iain Heuman was president of the company, and he said he didn't like the title **THE WINGED SERPENT**. He asked me what I thought of the title. I said, no, the first title I wrote was G. He said, I like that a lot better. Let's go back to that. So that's what happened. I think G is a provocative title and lead us to that little bit, 'G is Coming.'"

The film received screen previews in 1962, but was not officially released until 1963, when it became the first film Samuel Abbott released after leaving filmways (who had purchased AIP). Once more, there are human sacrifices to a phony god, this time some well-known singing people like to revise his god, questioning, while also discussing with some warring dragons, typed by leading the to the old's lair (actually, it's more like a lizard).

Murphy gave a wonderful performance, almost making his scenery, life-like characters amazing, and the rest of the cast (including Candy Clark, Kevin Connolly, and Richard Roundtree) was also quite good. The Winged Serpent itself seems like a stop-motion showcase to the film's-style science fiction filmmaking was not created by David Allen.

"The difference with G (versus other effects pictures)," said Cohen, "was that the effects were done after the picture was shot; whereas, a lot of times in a picture, the effects are done before the picture is shot. But what happened with G was that I had been on L, THE JURY and had not gotten along with the people, and we decided that we were not going to make the picture, we wanted to go but secretly kept on feeling very depressed so I was still living at this hotel in New York City, and I was still seeing the people go to work every day and come home. I thought, what am I going to do? Am I going to pack up my bags and go back to Los Angeles?"

"So had this script called G which was about this bird and every-thing, and I thought, Jesus, I bet I could get this thing into production in a couple of weeks, which I did. So two weeks after I left L, THE JURY, we were shooting G. There was almost no prep work at all. I got Michael Moriarty and David Caravino and Candy Clark and Richard Roundtree, and instead of two weeks we were shooting the picture, and the L, THE JURY people couldn't believe it. They were making in the same rental shooting other pictures and they were having terrible difficulties. They were shooting Saturday and Sunday and having 24-hour days and the budget went over \$1 million and the company went bankrupt. In the meantime, we were shooting our picture there, and we finished the same time they did, even though we started much later than they did. But, of course, we had no time to plan for proper special effects beforehand. We had to do them afterwards."

"So then I brought the footage but who showed it to David Allen, and naturally, he and his people said, well, you know you shot this all wrong because you have all moving shots. He knew to have stationary shots to do this model animation. I said, I don't want stationary shots. I don't want the shot locked down, looking up a building, seeing a bird flying around the Chrysler building. I want the audience to be flying around with the bird. I want the shots to be as close as I can get to the camera and as close as I can get to the camera. I said, I think it would be better because it represented a challenge to him to do something a little bit different for a change. It worked out better."

There has almost always been a secret for a good monster movie, but Cohen feels that the secret was to concentrate the focus on their attention on the flying glaucous in the film's ad campaign. "There were only six or seven minutes of special effects in the whole picture," Cohen bemoaned. "I know the way



Another victim of the alien-bred Mesianic with a god complex from Larry Cohen's satirical **GOD TOLD ME TO**.

the picture was advertised, you would have thought there were 30 minutes of special effects in the picture. They advertised it as a monster picture, so if you were expecting to see a monster like a King Kong movie and there was only six minutes of monster in the picture, then you'd be disappointed. I thought the film had just the right amount of special effects for what the picture was and what it was intended to be.

"So it was, the picture did a lot of business. It made almost a million dollars the first week in New York City alone, and we did very nicely with the film and made a profit from it, but it wasn't a breakout picture like IT'S ALIVE. I think that's because it didn't have the proper campaign. A campaign of a giant bird flying over the Chrysler building with a girl in its claws indicates to the audience that they are going to see a movie that was all special effects or a Japanese monster movie or something like that."

While Cohen is considered a triple-threat filmmaker - writer, producer, and director of his own films - there are some assemblages which Cohen worked on which he did not and was flying himself. One of these was the script for **SALON OF THE DEAD**, the adaptation of the Stephen King novel which was never ended as shooting. The project was written as a four-hour epic for television because it was decided that it would have been too expensive to have done as a movie.

Cohen's script was later rewritten, but though he finds the results disappointing, he still says that some elements he added were retained. He feels the gross sold to the project was that "you wait a long time to see a creature that appeared to be 'Maurice' or something. However, it was basically my idea to use the same sound as was used in the movie film, which was something they did so we were able to play the music, 'Maurice' - he's the actor in THE MAN WHO KNEW TOO MUCH he's not such of an actor if you leave him on the screen too long, but he has a good (i.e. sinister) look to him. I thought it was done and I didn't think it was a successful version of **SALON OF THE DEAD** because it didn't have any New England atmosphere. One thing Stephen King's books have is a lot of atmosphere of the location, of the town, and I felt the producers lost all that."

Cohen also criticized the aforementioned L, THE JURY with the intention of getting rid of him as an anti-juristic psychopath when the CIA manipulates it all the people they were killed. Cohen also scripted a film which became **SUCCESS**, which was largely rewritten by the film's director. Cohen did manage to direct the **Private Film** of L. STAN HOBBS (1966) from his own script, a film which he considers to be "the most interesting filmmaking" in the film since what he considers an educated guess as to the identity of "Deep Throat." The informant who breaks secrets for the Washington Post reporters.

Unfortunately, the film following the success of L, THE JURY was **KIDNAP**, and Cohen was always an odd as a director. The fact that it is one of Cohen's most entertaining efforts. The film was conceived as a sort of semi-sequel to L, THE JURY. **KIDNAP** is it constantly refers back on its own low budget. When Allen is an ordinary high school student with a John Birchard Old Memorial for a father, the father decides to go to Transylvania to fight Communism first-hand. The trip overseas includes a comical attempted kidnapping as a shot of a boy being jostled making progress over a map to Indiana the route, and then getting captured by a film to Indiana the final destination.

Of course, poor Allen does with some goals as gets stolen by a witch. At home, women participate in a film to show the shelter and fire at his son, only to have the bullet himself escape the shelter and kill himself. The main plot (inspired by different stories of peasants in the film) the picture involving a woman crawling to the ground, and Allen returns to his home pretending to be his own son because as a result of being a witch, he hasn't aged. He falls in love and tries to convince his newborn girl friend that he is a witch by trying himself to be a witch by having himself be transformed. But the scene is so bad that he's into being one (which is all right by now). Later, Allen Allen, as a psychiatrist, is called in on the case, and he manages to look him up in jail. Cohen the full movie, the transformation begins, but a film about the transformation and so the expanded special effects showing the transformation are never shown. Of course, the film goes for a big climax at the big home football game.

The film is very silly but nonetheless has a perverse charm and a sense of fun. It is refreshing in how it uses a heist as the lack of an adequate budget - and saves that an asset as it becomes the basis of many of the film's jokes. Recently, another filmmaker has picked up on the same basic idea with *TEEN SLAM*, but without Cohen's sly humor, it seems rather hollow.

1989 will be a big year for Cohen. He has two films coming from New Line Cinema and Embassy, as well as the *STUFF* from New Line. His film *PERFECT STRANGERS* (available on Embassy Home Video) was originally titled *BLACK RULE* until Columbia protested. Said Cohen, "PERFECT STRANGERS is about a two-year old child. It was really an experiment to direct a movie starting a two-year old, non-speaking child in the lead. What's interesting is that since we stopped shooting, there have been a lot of documents about children twelfthly. In court, whether children can really relate the truth, whether they can understand the difference between fantasy and reality."

"This picture is about a child who witnesses a murder but can't speak. He can't relate what he's seen, and nobody knows he knows what he saw, but he knows exactly what he saw. He doesn't exactly know that it was bad, he just has someone stealing somebody. The killer is a person he happens to like, so he goes around trying to slip up letters and tell the murder all the time, much to the killer's dismay because he has come to like the kid, kind of love him a little bit."

"This is an old-fashioned murder thriller. It's kind of a funny picture in its rep. It's got a lot of humor in it too. There's a scene where the killer, who is a handsome young guy, has moved in with the little boy's mother - he becomes friends with the mother so she can let the kid recognize him. Naturally, the mother thinks he's interested in her, so she strikes up an acquaintance which leads to romance, and he starts sleeping with her and taking care of the kid."

"She leaves him with the kid all the time because she is but doing her woman's life stuff and her alibi. He's just there, and he stays home and takes care of the kid. There's a scene where he's giving the dog a bath and he's reading him the *E.T.* storybook, relating to him about *E.T.* He says to the child, 'Remember what happened to *E.T.* when the police found out? He turned all white and he died.' That's because Henry found out, because Henry found out what happened. Henry must never find out. The police must never find out.' This guy likes *Home* to *E.T.*"

Cohen plans to hold a press conference with the kid before the film's release to find out just what the kid remembers about making the movie. Talking about his potential star, Cohen said, "Every time we did a scene, he did everything he was supposed to do. The only time he had a fit was when he had to do a scene. He's, and then he had a little extra time and for no reason at all we would try to do the scene over again for no reason other than pure selfishness. Then, the kid would fall down on the floor and have a fit. So, basically, this kid loves when he does his best work and that was it. He wasn't going to do any more takes. He was like Frank Sinatra."

Larry Cohen himself poses with a package of *THE STUFF*.

One of his films from New World is rather provocatively titled *SPECIAL EFFECTS*; however, because the film doesn't have any. Instead, a movie director postulates that murder is the ultimate special effect." Seeing murdered a woman and filmed her death, the director begins making a movie about the murder, only he casts the innocent husband in the role of the assassin and plans to make his scenario come true by leading the police to think that the husband really is the killer."

"The husband is a young guy who comes to New York to get his wife to come home with him," Cohen related. "They have a little baby. She's brought a film crew and a lot of cameras to the house of the baby. He films his wife working at a photographic salon where people take pictures of her naked - so the idea of people filming people is inherent from the beginning. He takes her home and shows her the movies of the baby, but she doesn't want to go home with him, so she makes up a story that she's close to getting a film deal with this movie director, whose name she sees on a notice across the street from the apartment where they're staying a investigative, and she says, 'It's going to be in the next picture.' He's going to meet him tonight and he's going to cast me in his picture." She's never met the guy. Subsequent to that, she goes to the director's house and tries to make her dreams come true, but instead she gets herself murdered."

"Then of course when the police see the husband, the husband says she was going to meet that director. They go to the movie director's house and the movie director denies everything and the husband gets arrested. While he's being arrested, the movie director goes up on the roof and photographs the street. He has the film crew with him and he's taking pictures of the husband and looks like the guy's wife. The husband is getting rid of all his wife's old clothes when the director insists that the husband get the clothes back so they can be used as evidence in the trial, and given the twisted reforms in the *Sedition* movie, he finds a burrhead who looks like his late wife. The director transforms her into a replica of the wife and the husband falls in love with her."

"He loses his sense of identity, a lot of twists, and I think it makes a statement about the movie business. I enjoyed making it," Cohen said.

Finally we come to Cohen's latest production, *THE STUFF*, the tale of a deadly desert. The ideas behind the film have to do with Cohen's feeling that commercials are programming people to become addicted to fast food, and the fact that people are doing things that they know are bad for them (i.e. cigarettes, hard drugs, etc.) and consumers still sometimes knowingly distribute material which they know to be unwholesome.

*THE STUFF* opens with a scene of the standard "bad man finds out Cohen's feeling that commercials are programming people to become addicted to fast food, and the fact that people are doing things that they know are bad for them (i.e. cigarettes, hard drugs, etc.) and consumers still sometimes knowingly distribute material which they know to be unwholesome."

Michael Herderty plans an industrial spy who discovers the world truth and decides to fight the onslaught of the *Stuff*. For most of his life, he has been totally unwholesome and even sickens himself "me" because he always wants to be little more. However, he falls for Andrea Accoloni, who was the wife of the man behind the *Stuff*'s marketing campaign and must convince her that the product she's been peddling to the American public is a threat to its very existence.

There is also a subplot about a boy named Jason (Scott Bakula) who happens to see the *Stuff* moving inside his refrigerator and tries to warn his family again, the service inside the family (or home), but is too late. There's also Chocolate Chip Charlie (Garrett Murlin) whose noodle choice have been bought out by the *Stuff* people who plan to change his noodle into the *Stuff*. He makes a new dessert flavor, this time, with the help of his friend right-winger Doc. Spawns (Paul Sorvino), who is convinced by Herderty that the *Stuff* is a communist plot, as our nation's only hope. Science fiction fans are sure to find echoes of the *E.T.* and *Q.U.E.R.T.* was it in the story, but it is, nonetheless, typically Cohen and offbeat.

Cohen has had a lot of thought into the film, which is bristling with ideas, but the drawbacks of clever exposition and lack of technical polish still plague the film's results. Unfortunately, some of the satire and comedy misfires, causing the film to fall short of the breeziness that Cohen hoped for, but nonetheless in this era of problem stories and films that contain no control, violence or artistic vision, Cohen's film truly defies his unique sensibilities.

Cohen truly is one of a kind, and he once again films that are quite like his. Few filmmakers are able to get such mileage out of such innocuous premises, but Cohen is willing to take a chance and try to track down all the possible permutations he can find in his fantastical ideas. His characters are met in the cookie-cutter mold of black villains and pure heroes. His themes are all highly fused, often morally suspect individuals, but in the course of the tale it's not long until they must make a decision to deal with the morality of their situation.

Cohen is not the simple explanation filmmaker some have painted him to be. He is a horror filmmaker whose only intention is to frighten. Indeed, he explicates modern evils like corporate greed, media distortion, religious corruption, the loss of assimilation of individuals into society so that they can become productive citizens, and the exploitation of human frailties, and he manifests those things as demons, striped serpents, "transcendental" monsters, teenage werewolves, and a deadly, living desert which makes you wonder if you are seeing it or if it is eating you? And in such outrageous conceptions the movie is interesting, at least.



**FORGOTTEN FACES OF  
FANTASTIC FILMS:  
KAMIYAMA SOJIN  
DORIS LLOYD**

by Jim Coughlin

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Despite the presence of many fine theatrical actors in Hollywood, "The producers have almost always been fit to CHASE westerners in sales pitches for these of Asiatic origin (e.g., Fu Manchu in the 1930s, Bruce Lee, Jackie Chan, and Yip Man in the 1970s, and Dan Aykroyd, Billy Crystal, Richard Dreyfuss, Mr. Wong — caricatures, Lugosi, Mr. Nogo — Peter Lorre, etc.). In the last several periods there was a marvelous Japanese actor working in Hollywood, a man named Toshiro Mifune, who was a real actor, a real star, a real personality — a real actor of skill. His name was Kenjiro Takino (aka Toshiro, Seiji, etc.). One only needs to view his screen portray in classics like *THE HEAVY OF SAMURAI* (1954), not just in realistic war films like *THE YAMATO* (1966), to see his greatness. He was a terrific actor. The newsmen who portrayed Toshiro were just waste made.

[illegible]

At the time Prince, Sejin was viewed early on as "THE TRIP OF GAGGAD (1934) at the Palace of No Sun, attempting to conquer Gaggad" ("It shall be mine, what I want - I take," the caption read). With this name that novel authors are knowledging in Gaggad as vice but the hand of its Princess (Jelawee, translation), the Henggiel (the Prince) comes to be a figure of a "superhero" who is a "strong" leader of the "No" arrived in Gaggad is greeted with terror by

LAST OF SURE (Pernambuco 1925): A portrait of Sejin on the airplane Marquand's Lee Tai

[illegible][illegible]

Bolin first played in a heavy Carey western, "SPT SHOES" (1925), as Yeh Tse, a Chinese underdog agent seeking for the San Francisco police. Wang again called upon Bolin to play Lee Tai, the evil Mandarin. "Wang or Star" (1926) was another film where Bolin played a villain. As a villain, he had a lot to do. He stole the "Golden Pele Hagri" with the aid of drugs and hypnotism, poisons her rescuee, starts a servant through the heart who falls in love, and uses his chess board to manipulate the lives of the film's characters. The Mandarin, who hides his poison under the gold covering his long finger nails, meets a violent retribution as he is placed in stocks and the bricks on which he stands are blown away, blowing him.

FRANK FLESH (1925), a tale of the aftermath of the Francisco  
merchandise, had Sojin as Wop. He played the Chinese cook of  
a gang building a railroad tunnel through a Colorado mountain  
in THE WHITE DESERT (1935) and was seen in MY LADY'S LIPS (1935),  
starting Cino Gao. He was SOLOIST (1936), John Barrymore's first  
version of Wop. He, along with Sojin as the harpener Fadden  
from 1928, modeled for Sojin-maw: THE RAT (as Gail), THE LADY  
LAD (as the Prime Minister's secretary), and DR'S DREAMS (as  
the singer).

THE ROAD TO MANILA (1936) provided Solja with another very villainous part, as well as the opportunity to work with Len Chaney Jr. As English Charlie Wang, Solja drives Len's merch, who turns out to be a spy, to the Philippines. Solja's character is a real snob about to force himself upon her. Joe Silverman and a wife fight scenes, during which Joe is virtually strangled by Wang. Director and knowing obtained fine performances from Chaney and Solja.

In "CHINA" (1934), starring Jeanette MacDonald and the Chinese diplomat, Solja teamed up with the beautiful 5'10" stunner by the Philippine Instruction of 1928, but Solja as a confidential agent in the Philippine Insular Service, was a very good character.

THE ROAD TO MANILA (1936) was the last of the LUCK OF THE HAWK (1936). As the tyrannical Sultan of Borneo, he imposed taxes and exacted punishment upon his subjects and even threw an army to restrain the kidnapping of his small rubbers in the "SOPHIST" (1936) and was killed as the Divine in the "Top Jack" segment of ORISON FROM HOME (1937). For C.A. Derrile, Solja played the Prince of Persia in THE KING OF KINGS (1937). He was also in "The Last Days of Pompeii" (1935) with the beautiful and beautiful Johnny Hines and then finds himself married to the obese princess (Gale London). Solja was Lo Tung, among the Chinese persecuted by Marco Polo, in OLD SAN FRANCISCO (1937) and played a king during the Boxer Rebellion in CHINA SOLJA (1937), starring TIM CONWAY.

Wajih met filmmaker's second Charlie Chan (George Kees in 1926's THE HOUSE WITHOUT A KEY was first) in THE CHINESE PRINCE (1927). The film, directed with fine atmospheric touches by Paul Leni, did not feature Chan as the major character, but the A.S. films commented, "...the acting honors must be bestowed on K. Sells



as Charlie Chan, an oriental detective." THE BLUE OWEN (1927) and Sojin as Jack Lee, an evil Chinese who "appears to have a weakness for standing behind a curtain, so that when a victim appears he is able to kill without noise and without the slightest risk to his own too attractive physiognomy" (The N.Y. Times). He was Henry Chan who "steals unobtrusively across America these are" (The N.Y. Times) in THE WANTED MAN (1927). He rang Kiang in STREET OF SHAME (1927). Sojin was a Chinese slave overboard who vengefully attacks Pauline Starck's minion and accidentally kills his own son in the process.

A film with a haunted house setting, SOMETHING ALWAYS HAPPENS (1928), featured Sojin as Chang-Tai, a notorious Chinese outlaw bent on stealing the Rochester Ruby (Oscar Johnson was on hand as "The Thief"). Also on Sojin's list of credits for 1928 were: THE CHURCH CITY (a live play), CHINESE OWEN (in the scenario), and THE HAWK'S REEF. Out with THE TIDE (as Chee Chan), and SOIN OF THE NIGHT (as not him, a Chinese with a heart). Sojin was a villainous native leader ("the malignant demon") in THE RESCUE (1929), a Ronald Colman adventure set in Java waters. CHINA SNAKE (1929) was Sojin's only starring role as Wong Fung, "the Great Cobra." He was in five more as the diabolical boss of an island that provided the base for traffic in narcotics and white slavery.

Other prominent roles for Sojin (1929), directed by Benjamin Christensen, included a devil worshipping cult, black witchery, occultic phenomena, etc. that turn out to be part of a practical joke played on Thelma Todd and Creighton Hall. Sojin, dressed in Arab garb, was properly sinister and menacing as the host of the weird dwelling.

Sojin trained the chief of a Buddhist vase to America in BACK FROM HANGKOW (1929). He had brief bits in some early sound films, including PAINTED FACES (1929), ORCHIDS (1929), and the women's extravaganza THE SON OF SHAM (1929). THE LITTLE NIGER (1929) was concerned with systematic murders at a fiction office; it made and featured Boris Karloff (as Ansel), Javi Millan, and Lionel Belmore. Sojin portrayed the Muslim beggar in to conduct a strike which leads to the revelation of the murderer.

CHINA OWEN (1930), set in German East Africa, had Sojin as Papi, while THE BLUE WARRIOR (1930) gave him his last role in America as Wong the Chinese cook who aids Francis X. Buchanan in his military. After these two films were completed, Sojin returned to Japan, where he remained from then on. He continued to work in the Japanese motion picture industry, starring in films such as SHOTO AND THE SAGES (1931). Actually nothing more was heard about Sojin in the United States until word came from the Kyoto News Service that he had passed away in Tokyo on July 28, 1934, at the age of 32.

It is really a shame that Sojin did not remain in the United States after 1930 and delve further into the realm of Fantasy Film. Any of his films still in existence, particularly THE HOUSE OF SHAM, are worth viewing for studying the work of a fine actor and a perfectly controllable villain.

BORIS LLOYD (b. 1901 - 1970)

If the character actors that have gone to be associated with the bigger film genre, many stand out as colorful, memorable participants - such as Maude Egan and Jim Conway - while others are memorable because of physical appearance and/or peculiar society, like Boris Karloff. Boris Lloyd, however, is an actor who really doesn't fit in such categories. He was a slender, agile performer, whose talent was much greater than the size and type of roles he often was stuck in - be it a maid, landlady, prostitute, or soldier. Lloyd's ability to project inner strength and a sense of dignity would show forth even in ridiculous parts, such as Harry Myers in Monogram's amateurish version of D. W. GRIFF (1932). Boris became one of Hollywood's "hospitable," while appearing in over 70 films - very uncluttered - in a career that spanned over 40 years.

The slender, red-headed Boris Lloyd was born in Liverpool, England, on July 3, 1901. His grandfather had been a noted actor and actor in Liverpool and it wasn't long before young Boris caught the acting bug, beginning his stage career as a student at the Liverpool Academy of Dramatic Art in 1914. At 17, he landed a try-on at carrying a tray off - he later recalled "I said that for eighteen months, and then they gave me a dagger point and said so." Lloyd spent six years with the Liverpool Academy, gaining the most notable playing his little girl who's gone along in Galsworthy's The Silver Box and other dramas. Boris then ventured to London, where he established himself as Joyce in The Edge of Night (1921). Over too in the Village Jubilee (1922), and Mirth in The Tailor and the Woman (1923). Lloyd also made his film debut in England in THE DOCTOR OF DOUBT (1923).

In 1925, Boris journeyed to California to visit his sister Milla Lloyd, a sculptress who was married to actor-producer George A. Brown. Lloyd became friendly with Norma Taurog, who secured Boris a role in a semi-Cop comedy of helping Cleopatra followed by a part in the film THE LADY (1925). The N.Y. Times commented on the latter, "There is Grace, the chorus girl, is impersonated by Boris Lloyd, whose keen-up and costume are quite effective, as is also her character." Lloyd made notable appearances as Lincolnton Potts, opposite Len Chaney Jr., in THE BLACKBIRD (1926), Lillian Hunter in BLACK PARADES (1926), Helen Wayne in LONELY LONES (1927), and the drug-addicted Georgia Brown in THE DRUG CASE (1927). As Boris Lloyd, one was the beautiful title figure in CHARLES'S ANGEL (1928). The five actor George Arliss admired Lloyd's work and utilized him in some recent films: LONELY (1929), as Mrs. Fenwick, the Russian spy D.D. ENGLISH (1930), as Raymond in THE CASE OF ARTHUR LILLIAN (1930), and VOLTRINE (1930), as Mrs. Chelton.



Top: FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN (Universal 1943); Boris Lloyd, as the nurse, attends to the wounded Len Chaney Jr.; Bottom: THE ROAD TO MARRIAGE (MGM 1940). English Charlie King (Lloyd), Singapore Joe (Len Chaney Jr.), and players look hysterically.

Lloyd excelled as Kitty, the London girl who befriends her clerk, in MARLOWE (1927). The film marked the start of a lifelong friendship with director James Whale. Boris later would appear for him during war, with commutation, at a small Burke Marine Camps theatre where they entertained stalling servicemen. When Whale died in 1957, Lloyd was one of the few from the film industry at the funeral.

Boris appeared as Mrs. Dalton in TAKING THE AIR (1932) and replaced the role in TAKING THE AIR (1934). As Mrs. Humphry in A SIGN IN SOLE (1931), starring Reginald Owen as Sherlock Holmes, Lloyd was properly assigned as the bachelorette whose husband has left his estate estate to a trust and nothing to her. Other fantasy-related roles saw her as Lady in THE WOLF MAN (1941) and MEDALIST WITH HONOR (1941), starring Claude Rains, and Mrs. Savel in PETER JACKSON (1935), with Gary Cooper. Boris was seen, often briefly, in many prominent films of the thirties. Mrs. Savel in BLACK STREET (1932), the Duchess of Richmond in BECOMING A MAN (1935), Florence the Flower Girl in HANGOVER (1937), to name a few.

When Universal began its second horror cycle, Boris Lloyd became a frequent face in the ensuing films. As Mrs. Williams in THE WOLF MAN (1941), Boris pointed out to fellow villagers that the town of badgers coincided with the arrival of Lady Helen (Len Chaney Jr.). Lloyd was Marjorie, the maid of Dr. Ludwig Frankenstein (Boris Karloff), who receives an amputated soldier named Ivan (Eric Lugan) in the tent of FRANKENSTEIN (1942). She was also seen as Miss Judd in WOLF MOUNTAIN (1942), with Lloyd and Lionel Lyle. In FRANKENSTEIN MEETS THE WOLF MAN (1943) Boris was the nurse at the Queen's Hospital in England who checks an Lawrence Lasker (Chaney Jr.), only to find him agitated and disoriented, with his winks side down.

Boris portrayed Mrs. Carter in Julian Javits's FURSE AND FANTASY (1943). As Jennie in THE LOOPER (1944), Lloyd had what film historian Douglas Mark calls "a significant screen come" as the hands of Laidy Crago. Other feature film roles at this time were Made in the U.S.A. (1944), Mrs. Reynolds (1944), starring Jan Hall, and a bit in TAILOR AND THE LADY (1944), starring Jan Hall.

Although Lloyd frequently appeared on stage in California from the '20s on (e.g., She's Apples and the Lion - '35, Pearl Cressida's Knight at Arms - '40), Sir Cedric Hardwicke provided

Deals with her first and only Broadway portrayal as Mrs. Milling, the hard-headed mother, in J.B. Priestley's *An Inspector Calls* (1947). Most of Lloyd's roles were female, although her ALICE only commented that "Doris Lloyd certainly some damn good talent" to the part of the mother."

THE SECRET LIFE OF WALTER MITCH (1947) contained an amusing sequence wherein Jerry Rags, unwittingly involved in intrigue, tries to retrieve a jewel being delivered to Mrs. Fairbanks (Doris) - an action her late husband obviously misinterpreted. THE SON OF DR. MURDER (1951) had Lloyd as Lotta Sorrell, whose Louis Hayward recalls while attempting to clear his late father's name. That same year (1951), Doris provided the voice of the host in Disney's animated classic ALICE IN WONDERLAND.

As Lloyd gracefully entered into middle age, she had interesting parts in some major films: Mrs. Cooper in THE LUTHER (1948), Mrs. Minnie Churchill in MILDRED (1949), Madame Trelawny, the hot designer, in FANTASTIC LADY (1944), Mrs. Mable, the small landlady who accidentally saves the day, in MY NAME IS JULIA ROSS (1948), and Arthur Jack in NOBLESSE (1953). A far cry from Doris' early portrayals of aloof women with her typical appearances as Countess Marnet in THE DUE (1950) and Margaret Sherfield in THE SOUND OF MUSIC (1965).

Doris Lloyd's final fantasy film was George Pal's THE TIME MACHINE (1960), in which she played Mrs. White, and Disney's more FANTASY (1964), wherein she was depicted as a benevolent. Doris' last screen role was that of a servant in ROSE (1967), starring Rosalind Russell.

In the 1950's, Lloyd became a familiar face to television viewers and was seen in many segments of fantasy nature. On Alfred Hitchcock Presents alone, Doris was featured as Doris's films in "A Girl in the Pool" (4/1/56), Miss Agnes Macdonald who is killed by some Crown in "Agnes Macdonald" (4/2/56), Mrs. Clavett in "Safety for the Stranger" (11/23/56), and Mable in "The Schizoid-Mechanical Method" (11/2/60). Lloyd was also on the stage beyond "The Hurling" - 3/8/60 and Thriller "Dance Legacy," at Mrs. Fringle - 5/24/61. Virtually part of the filmstock TV stock company, Doris portrayed Mrs. Gibbs in "The Dark Pool" (5/5/60) and Mable in "Mabel" (12/5/64) for The Alfred Hitchcock Show.

In early 1968, Doris moved to Santa Barbara to live with her widowed sister Mable. A short while later, on May 21, 1968, Doris Lloyd passed away at the age of 71 due to a blood clot.

Lloyd once had commented to writer Myrtle Cook in a 1950's interview, "I do not emphasize the shady characters particularly. I attempt to play them sure entertainingly than well-borne ladies. The public seems the distinction which elevates them to a certain prominence. It is the personal reaction of each spectator that gives cinema ladies of the cinema - or any special type - their importance, not any act of the actress." Perhaps Doris Lloyd was correct in her appraisal, but the film legacy she left behind, including roles in some horror classics, indicates that she was indeed a gifted, versatile, and memorable actress.

CLAUDE (Universal 1934): Doris Lloyd poses for a studio publicity shot. She played every type of female character from "bad girl" to happy-go.

(EDITOR'S COMMENTS continued from page 3)  
phone rang - This is Frank Marshall!" The words cheerfully provided. To those unfamiliar, Marshall in the director responsible for last issue's frequently reviewed *RAVEN* CASE. For the next 15 minutes we spoke about that film, some future film prospects, and ultimately he thanked us for my wonderful article. I thanked him for making such a wonderful film. Mrs. Cooney, my phone number is listed in the *Southwest Directory*.

Finally, a few thoughts about the ever-expanding modern movie theater. In the past, modern theaters, two large theater complexes (each having five separate auditoriums) have opened within the past several months. Two more multiple-theater complexes are due to open within the next year. Remember when theaters used to offer giant, large-screen Cinemascope movies! Within the last five years, fewer and fewer wide-screen movies have been made, and the reason is obvious when visiting any of the newer, multi-screen movie complexes. The screen size is so small, and most importantly, the screen walls is manufactured primarily for "flat," non-Cinemascope projection. In the past, when theaters played wide-screen movies, the screen could be opened up to make room. Instead, the bottom eighth of the screen had to be masked by a heavy black covering that actually reduced the viewing surface of the already small screen. This allows the screen to assume the proper projection ratio now being so many more times with it is high. So in techno-conscious 1980, Cinemascope means a smaller, not a larger, screen! How drastic!

On the positive side, all the new theaters feature state-of-the-art sound systems and are equipped for Dolby stereo. Indeed's being projected in Dolby stereo just like the former generation screened the ads to realize just what was the "revolutionary," "passion," or "Cinemascope." What is even more ironic is the fact that most of the newer theaters are equipped to project *Three Film* onto a postage-stamp size screen. Don't technology grow!

Let me leave with a final thought which may hopefully inspire new readers to write and comment. I honestly feel that 1984-85 has been the strongest year for horror/fantasy films in quite some time (perhaps earlier the films received this issue having earned four or five star ratings). The *SL* has not as been been RETURN TO 02, A WIDEWAVE ON ELM STREET, FRIDAY NIGHT, and GUY OF THE DEAD. Each of these films is unique and accomplishes something a little fresh, a little different. *ELM STREET* offers brilliant liminal space, *02* offers mesmerizing fairy-tale escape, *FRIDAY NIGHT* offers the return of the traditional vampire, and *GUY OF THE DEAD* transcends the apocalyptic genre to make a well crafted, artistic statement. *Guy*, ultra-gore can be intelligent!

For me personally, I cannot remember when so many excellent genre films have all been released in so brief a period of time. Each, if circumstances had been different, would qualify as a "mid-winter" best of the year. But never has it been so difficult for me to select my favorite from each of these four films as superior and deserving of recognition.

Look for *WIDEWAVE* #39 next October (mid-winter time). Remember to support the horror/science fiction/fantasy film genre by going out to the movies!

*Gary J. Savich*





# BOOK REVIEWS

by Gary J. Svehla

**FANT AND FURIOUS: THE STORY OF AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL PICTURES** by Mark Thomas McGee, 260 pages, digest-size, cloth, McFarland & Company, Inc., P.O. Box 411, Jefferson, NC 28640 - \$17.95.

When one thinks of sleazy films and 1950's science fiction flicks, American International Pictures comes directly to one's forefront. Even though McGee's book does not exclusively document AIP's fantasy product, it most definitely highlights this subcategory of the company's commercial, near-to-order product.

The book gives in-depth coverage, nearly 100 pages, and accounts humorous anecdotes with many of the female (and infamous) celebrities connected with the company (including Susan Kneff, Charles Griffin, Beverly Searles, Roger Corman, Bert L. Gordon, Edward Gerny, and of course, Herman Krim).

This book's only flaw is its brevity; the studio's history is documented in a lean 100 pages. The reader wishes to read more behind-the-scenes stories, more in-depth interviews, and a few behind-the-scenes juicy gossip for such a colorful studio whose offices housed such off-Saturn characters. Stay on and off screen - 100 pages just is too short to cram it all in.

The impressive volume does include biographies of all the major minor personalities connected with the studio and also includes a definitive bibliography of every AIP production.

Very interesting reading, but the book should have been twice as thick!

**AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL PICTURES: A FILMOGRAPHY** by Robert L. Ottomano, 425 pages, digest-size, cloth, Garland Publishing, Inc., 134 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10016 - \$35.00.

The perfect companion piece to Mark McGee's *Fant and Furious*, a filmography is more than a handy reference work. Ottomano includes at least a half-page of complete commentary and synopsis with each chronological title listed. Even though space allowed for critical analysis is next to a minimum, Ottomano is knowledgeable enough to be able to provide interesting little anecdotes to embellish his dry filmography.

For all science fiction/horror film fans, American International Pictures are essential to the genre, and thus, this volume is essential. Ottomano has provided an indispensable reference work that is as interesting as it is definitive.

**VINTAGE SCIENCE FICTION FILMS 1894-1949** by Michael Bennett, 219 pages, digest-size, McFarland & Company, Inc., P.O. Box 411, Jefferson, NC 28640 - \$14.95.

Here we have another relatively brief volume which tries to detail the story of science fiction films from 1894-1949. Surprisingly enough, author Bennett does a functional job. The book, divided into only seven chapters - Silents, Sound, and Serials - only occupies the book's first 100 pages. The rest of the text is devoted to a lengthy filmography.

While one criticized first three chapters for an adequate job of covering 55 years of sci-fi filmmaking into proper perspective, most of the information contained therein can be read elsewhere. Bennett's chief flaws are allowing too much space to be devoted to synopses of old constructs such as *Flash Gordon* and *Dr. Frankenstein*. Also, who needs to read another mile-high list of stars like William Henry Hunt (Boris Karloff)?

Bennett's text is particularly strong in re-revealing behind-the-scenes production news, particularly how interested Bela Lugosi's salary in \$500 per week and planned to film all his footage in *Flash Gordon*. Also, who needs to read another mile-high list of stars like William Henry Hunt (Boris Karloff)?

Therefore, Bennett's job was to embellish and "type-set" via editing all the information he could glean about the genre into a tight 100 pages. Too much information is given to the silents, already over-exposed genre giants. And wastes when bag for in-depth info - such as *Flash Gordon* and *Dr. Frankenstein* series of the 1930's - are once again glossed over.

While Bennett has very little information here which cannot be found elsewhere, his volume is valuable as a thumb-nail sketch of the genre years 1894-1949 for those who haven't the time to read numerous, larger volumes.

**CLICK SMITH'S 50-51-FOURTEEN MONSTER MAIL-UP HANDBOOK** by Click Smith, 108 pages, full-size, paper, Magpie, Inc., P.O. Box 8274, Pittsburgh, PA 15224 - \$9.95.

Met at all a film reference book, this is an up-dated 1946 1950 version of clicking artist Click Smith's hard-on, how-to-do-it manual book. It is no way chronicles the massive film career of 1946's Oscar winning celebrity.

Detailed, it gives clear instructions and includes page-after-page of time-up photography (even a color photo section showing how to do makeup for ghouls, werewolves, Martians, wars, bed-heads, beauty, and the funback of hair fern. If anyone is an interest or a hobby, this practical guide is a must-have!

**SCIENCE FICTION FILMS OF THE SEVENTIES** by Craig Anderson, 304 pages, digest-size, paper, McFarland & Company, Inc., P.O. Box 411, Jefferson, NC 28640 - \$15.95.

This is a first for McFarland & Company - a paperback volume! However, typically McFarland books are sadly lacking in the construction of photos, but happily it must be noted that the earlier section of the book contains 32 glossy pages of interesting photos related to the text.

Like McFarland's long-standing *Golden Years* by Bill Warren, Anderson's *Science Fiction Films of the Seventies* follows the same basic format. Major genre films of the decade are chronologically and are listed with complete cast and production credits. A synopsis is included, but most beneficial and interesting are that are an personal and refreshing as the similar analyses to be found in *Mean Streets* by the same. And unlike other issues of this list, the commentary is distinctly and refreshingly optimistic.

The book reads like a bull-session held among sci-fi film buffs on any given evening.

Two books recently released detailing the history of American International Pictures will definitely mention *THE SHE CREATURE*, one of their sleeker gems.





The only flaw, if we can consider it a flaw, is the decade covered - lots of real horror science fiction films were released during the Seventies that Anderson devotes some coverage to the films of Larry (THE ALIVE) Cohen but he does to the even-modified genre giants, so again he is to be commended. This is another must-have if it's a true delight!

**CRITICISM IN THE FANTASY FILM** by Bill George, 128 pages, full-color, paper, League, Inc., P.O. Box 9474, Pittsburgh, PA 15224 - \$14.95.

One would think that the subject of criticism in horror films, an exploitation one, would have been covered in the annals of film criticism by 1983. Such is not the case. Unfortunately, Bill George's outstanding book will not be the final word on the subject. Even though the text is fascinating, and even though the interviews are first-rate, the book lacks a certain unifying focus which draws everything together. Since interviews range from coverage of such diverse personalities as Joe Dante, John Wood, and Steele Stearns, the volume would benefit from at least one chapter putting the entire subject into some type of historic perspective.

Criticism benefits from a boy of race, seldom-published photos which make the subject matter in all its - naturalness. George's writing style - at times a little too high-brow for the subject matter - is nevertheless intelligent, humorous, and always interesting. Yet the book suffers because of his-hered repetition: George asks-and-gets from one meaning anecdote (word) to another interview (page) to still another riveting intellectual shoring. If only his editors had allowed the writer more space to fully develop his ideas, the volume would have been infinitely more reliable, perhaps definitive.

However, this book does show the temptation of merely using an excuse to print photos of nude actresses without an intellectual framework. It appears that the book was intended as a Picture in the Cinema version of modern horror movies. Even though Bill George's expertise as a genre writer is being short-changed, this volume is definitely recommended.

**FLAWS OF REASON: ESSAYS ON THE HORROR FILM** edited by Barry Keith Grant, 442 pages, digest-size, cloth, Scarecrow Press, Inc., 52 Liberty Street, P.O. Box 436, Metuchen, New Jersey 08840 - \$27.50.

For me personally, this book is a true delight, an intellectual/erudite presentation of the horror film genre told via the resulting art of assorted essays.

The book very well could be a "required reading" textbook for a college level horror film course. So let me be blunt in mentioning that this volume tends to become acridly and hip-intellectual so it may turn many genre lovers off. But let me be quite honest, while I do not accept many of the views set forth in this collection of essays, I was never bored and I was often shocked, outraged, and Bill George's footnotes alone briefly interview the writer's erudite touch (also demonstrated by C. Lee).



and stimulated by what I read. Perhaps it's the English teacher in me, or perhaps it is the obvious joy of remembering what my college experience was versus what it might be today if such courses and intellectual criticism existed back in 1940-1970 when I earned my college BA degree.

The essence of this volume can be summed up in one essay: "The Idea of Apocalypse in THE THING AGAINST MEASURES" by Christopher Sharrett. In it, Sharrett states that the film has been incorrectly analyzed as being a parody of the science film. Instead, according to Doug Fieger (the director) and the novel (the script), the movie comments on the "total annihilation of the universe." The film tries to explain what happens to a culture when technology replaces human labor (the film's "science") use to slaughter and kill a massive species (the). Grampa, known as the best killer in the slaughterhouse, is referred to as a "living corpse" or a reminder of the "old days." He has the habit of crushing the skull - with a hammer - of the innocent victims. He stops the hammer - showing "the importance of humor and irony."

For these alone alone alone who enjoy this variety of intellectual head game, I heartily recommend this book. It will certainly outrage and delight - but it is not everyone's cup of herbal tea!

**MUSIQUE FANTASTIQUE: A SURVEY OF FILM MUSIC IN THE FANTASTIC CINEMA** by Randall S. Leppin, 432 pages, digest-size, cloth, Scarecrow Press, Inc., 52 Liberty Street, P.O. Box 436, Metuchen, New Jersey 08840 - \$17.95.

Randall S. Leppin, a very familiar name on the fanzine circuit, has written absolutely the definitive book on film music in the fantasy film genre. Simply stated, this hefty volume should definitely be added to one's library, even if the buyer is not particularly a lover of movie soundtracks.

The book is structured historically, starting with the 1930's, continuing into the 1940's and 40's, then covering the music of Milton Rosen, then moving on to the 1950's science fiction genre, continuing with Bernard Herrmann, spreading out with the Japanese horror genre, exploring the music of Hammer, straddling and next to Beethoven, General, and Company, etc. Special chapters follow including those on Japanese Fantasy, Tolkienian Scouting, Jerry Goldsmith, John Williams, and Electronics.

Major composers include a comprehensive bibliography of recorded film music as well as a thorough filmography listing all fantasy film titles scored by everyone from Temple Grandy to Carl Zeller.

The volume is far from a cold reference work as it contains interviews, essays, and comparisons of styles between music makers which make this book fascinating reading.

**HORROR AND SCIENCE FICTION FILMS III** by David C. Willis, 349 pages, digest-size, cloth, Scarecrow Press, Inc., 52 Liberty Street, P.O. Box 436, Metuchen, New Jersey 08840 - \$25.00.

Strikingly, when the first Willis volume appeared in 1979, it became the most definitive check-list/review of horror and science fiction films ever compiled. It was essential when looking up the credits of a film for an article, when checking the moving time when purchasing a new film print, and when identifying lists on the distribution company for the film listed. I often return to these Willis volumes for they are indeed the single most important series of film reference books I own.

The third volume - covering fantasy films released from Oct. 31, 1981 through December 31, 1984 - continues 1980s most noteworthy tradition. Since Willis has now turned his original, definitive notebook into an ongoing series, the initial impression of volume III does not compare to the original volume. Instead, even Willis only has to document two year's worth of film releases - he has the space to expand his analyses and - most crucially - his information analyses. Therefore, the reference work is just as well documented but is actually more fun to read because Willis has put some of his own opinions into each film's coverage.

Simply stated, this is an essential series for all genre lovers.

**HOLLYWOOD'S SMALL TOWN** by Kenneth Macdonald, 258 pages, digest-size, cloth, Scarecrow Press, Inc., 52 Liberty Street, P.O. Box 436, Metuchen, New Jersey 08840 - \$14.50.

**SARK CITY: THE FILM NOIR** by Spencer Selby, 253 pages, digest-size, McFarland & Company, Inc., P.O. Box 471, Jefferson, NC 28640 - \$18.95.

**HOLLYWOOD AND AMERICAN HISTORY: A FILMOGRAPHY OF OVER 250 MOTION PICTURES DEPICTING U.S. HISTORY** by Michael R. Pollis, 332 pages, digest-size, cloth, McFarland & Company, Inc., P.O. Box 471, Jefferson, NC 28640 - \$23.95.

**REAL AMERICA AND WORLD WAR II** by Craig M. Campbell, 303 pages, digest-size, cloth, McFarland & Company, Inc., P.O. Box 471, Jefferson, NC 28640 - \$29.95.

**HENRY FORD: A BIOGRAPHY** by Allan Roberts and Max Goldstein, 199 pages, digest-size, cloth, McFarland & Company, Inc., P.O. Box 471, Jefferson, NC 28640 - \$15.95.

**THE CINEMA OF AMBIGUOUSITY** by David M. Gendel, 294 pages, digest-size, cloth, McFarland & Company, Inc., P.O. Box 471, Jefferson, NC 28640 - \$19.95.



by Gary J. Svehla

\*\*\*\*\*  
EXCELLENT  
VERY GOOD  
\*\*\*\*\*  
MEDIOCRE  
\*\*\*\*\*  
FAIR  
\*\*\*\*\*  
WORTHLESS

#### METROPOLIS \*\*\*\*\*

Probably classes who first saw *METROPOLIS* when it was originally released during 1936 might not think too highly of this colorized, delay-late, race-record remastering of a silent classic.

But it is to the credit of all the technicians involved that this ancient chestnut has once again been made palatable to a new generation of movie-goers who now view Fritz Lang's vision of the future as an extended rack-and-roll.

Fortunately, the final result is a startling re-inventing of art, not a crass attempt at commercialism. Giorgio Moroder's inspired scoring featuring several songs as performed by currently popular rock artists does succeed on the emotional level. These songs and voices literally speak for the characters we see up on the screen with elegance. What might have been packaged and sold as camp here becomes just as seamlessly riveting as it was in 1926.

While it might seem sacrilegious to some, the final result is that a silent 1926 masterpiece has been presented in such a format to audiences in 1984/85 that the original artistic intent of the film has been undisturbed some 60 years after it was first released. Fritz Lang and Moroder must both accept equal credit for this!

#### THE COMPANY OF WOLVES: \*\*

What might have been an intellectual two-de-force ultimately fails on just about every level. Needless to say "Little Red Riding Hood" as filched through Freudian psychoanalysis centering upon Grandmother Angela Landwehr's warning to her granddaughter to beware of the wolf in all men.

The narrative structure of the movie confusingly assumes as a little girl in modern times is dreaming at night in bed and experiences dreams alike scenes as dream characters themselves tell stories within the dream.

The eagerly anticipated special makeup effects created by Chris Farrow (which feature men being transformed into wolves and, most startling, a wolf's head emerging from inside a woman's side-opened mouth) are very disappointing and pale in execution and technique when seen side by side with Rob Bott's stellar work in *THE HOWLING*.

The film only succeeds on one level - the studio created forest set is a true delight. Every tree, pathway, and shrub is landscaped with atmosphere and intention. Even though the Shepperton Studio sets are obviously just that, the almost fairy-tale world becomes both startlingly beautiful and nightmarish within a matter of moments in the light-seared after light day and night. Despite. But even such stylistic pretensions cannot save this movie from tedious and gratuitousness.

#### BACK TO THE FUTURE: \*\*\*\*\*

Ever though the summer of 1985 will be lauded as the summer of youthful love awakens, *BACK TO THE FUTURE* is a first-rate delight. Just the promise of having personality Michael J. Fox return in time to 1955 having to fight off the wicked-out inventor of his then teenage mother is absolutely clever. The fact that Fox's father is a nerd and that his mother shows little interest in him further compounds the joy prediction.

It is truly the performance - Fox as the vulcanic head fighting for his very existence, Christopher Lloyd as the wicked-out inventor, and Lea Thompson et al. - that make such emotional involvement from the audience. It is simply delightful to see the 1985 version of *Backward, U.S.A.* become transformed into the world of 1955 where no one has heard of Tab Aids and Pepsi Free must be sold for.

In its light fantasy environment, *BACK TO THE FUTURE* cleverly balances both the heart and funny-side. It is one of the summers of '85's unexpected treasures!

#### RETURN TO DE: \*\*\*\*\*

A new childhood classic is upon us, and once again, the critics for the most part are treating it, but have no fear the critics in 1979 were not too kind toward the original *RETURN OF DE*. One can only hope that word of mouth demands and that this film can find its audience. Look at it this way - *RETURN TO DE* is that generation's *SEVENTH VOYAGE OF SINDBAD*, the archetypal mythological classic, except *DE* is the better film!

Once one re-views the original *DE* novel, it becomes increasingly infuriating to read critics who say *RETURN TO DE* simply because it has a depressing scene and lacks the non-shin-armor-out of the original. *RETURN TO DE* perfectly captures the style and feel of the literary classics far more effectively than the 1979 film could ever hope to. Walter Murell's direction is simply on target creating an absolutely stunning visual landscape: not just the pillaged and ravaged world of *DE*, but the American Gothic landscape of Kansas with its dust-bowl farm houses and its ragging clouds.

The special effects - unlike the techno-mechanical and generally needless *ELN* special effects still - are absolutely incredible, especially Will Henson's state-of-the-art claymation animation which rivals the work of either *Mythomex* or *Orion*.

Some all the fantasy characters that *Orion* encounters are so richly mechanical creations, they do lack the heart and personality of the *Scotty-Kearns*-in *Mythomex* relationship from the 1979 original version - but the audience does come to care for them. It is simply through the intense and sensitive performance of *Return to DE* that this movie gains a dramatic perspective and brings all the elements of characterization, visual design, and special effects together. She is absolutely pivotal to the success of *RETURN TO DE*.

Finally, the sequence where evil witch-hunters inexplicably portrayed with gusto by Jean Reno displays her chamber of living heads becomes an instant candidate for horror hall of fame. Simply put, *RETURN TO DE* is a fantasy film of the highest order - a true classic.

#### GOALS: \*

Every genre classic inspired quickback rip-offs. *ALLEN* spawned *SCARED TO DEATH* and *HUMANOID* from the *DEEP*. *Jaws* spawned *ORCA*, *THE KILLER WHALE*. And now *GOALS*, the mega-hit of last summer, has inspired comedies *GOALS* and *GOALS II*. It is not that the comedies themselves, designed by screen writer John Swartz, are not ingenious - in fact, they are the only positive aspect of the production - but the story and acting is so non-student, even for a low-budget production. An absolute waste!

#### EXPLOSION: \*\*

Joe Devita is a director unafraid of leaving his personal trademarks on his work. *EXPLOSION* still remains his most fully accomplished work to date. *EXPLOSION* was a true follow the *REAR WINDOW* when looking at the artistic whole, while financially, *EXPLOSION* was his success. *EXPLOSION* shows Devita's unexpected shrewdness, and while it features a brilliant *Goathead* sequence near the end of the film, the movie nonetheless must be judged as a partially interesting failure.

The problem is one of both creativity and script. While Devita attempts the same concept that Richard Donner achieved with his painful end of the *GOATHEAD*, the three post-*Goathead* leads lack kinetic energy that makes the audience care about them at their inception.

The script resembles looking a strong dramatic core or even a solid confrontation between other ideas or characters. The movie is simply being until all three youthful astronauts confront pop-culture's *Twisted* alien! Only then does Devita's kinetic energy become evident in the movie's core creative.

But, one other brilliant sequence is included but sometimes on a completely different level. It is the final down sequence where one of the leads is flying through space with the pretty alien girl he is infatuated with. In its broadest way *Devita* is exploring early movie images we all have felt in that innocent period before physical maturity. This down sequence perfectly captures this innocence of pre-adolescence, and for some odd reason, it constantly lingers in my imagination.

THE TERMINATOR: \*\*\*\*

WISCONSIN/DIRECTOR James Cameron's THE TERMINATOR is classic "B" exploitation film fare. The square-jawed Arnold Schwarzenegger, portraying a programmed killing machine, has found the perfect role for his limited acting ability. The story is intelligent if not original in the annals of science fiction literature. [I.F. writer Jerrie Killian said and was given an A and credit for his creative contribution explaining the film's plot borrowed freely from one of his stories.] The visual action is non-stop burning down the highways at laser speed. The violence is brutal and sober. The characters are developed to the degree that the audience cares about them and feels for them - without having to slow the plot down to develop character empathy.

And finally, the stop-motion animation, created by the team of Stan Winston, Doug Schaeck, and Peter Kinkaid, leaves the viewer more than a little bit of the best of Ray Harryhausen's work.

As far as action-adventure, surface slick exploitation goes, films just do not get any better. And surprisingly, the film still holds up upon repeated viewings. THE TERMINATOR is definitely the genre surprise of the year - a brutally stylish, excellently crafted gem.

CRIMINALS: \*\*\*

Some viewers expecting to be terrified by the horrors within Stephen King's closet will be greatly disappointed. For CRIMINALS EYE travels the Hitchcockian road of suspense and more closely resembles The Twilight Zone. For me, the film offers 80 or so minutes of "thrilling pleasure" - no more, no less.

My personal rage seems centered on "Meditations, Pt. 1" when James Woods' smug wife is nag-stopping the unidentified flake girl that is shocking her in agonizing torment as the room bleeds "The Heart" slams over the speakers in time to her tortured screams. The film, caperily directed by Louis L'Amour and John Badham, events for his tacit 007, is filled to the brim with shiny shiny and clever plot twists thus presenting another side of King's talent.

2001: \*\*\*

Everyone wanted to know what the secrets of the Maelstrom were in 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY. Thus, director Peter Jackson and author Arthur C. Clarke provide the ultimate answer. Too bad.

After the original 2001: A SPACE ODYSSEY was released, audiences were baffled by the metaphysical implications of what it all meant. Arthur C. Clarke's novel of the same name came out after the film's release attempting to more clearly explain its meaning.

But what was the joy of the original movie - being so open-ended in plot that the ending could mean different things to different people. No matter what it finally went to director Stanley Kubrick, the ending was profusely and maliciously misinterpreted. The writer has a fine space opera and is in the sequel - and they are visually stunning - so no matter how effective character interplay has become since the first film - and it has become - the fact remains that any literal explanation of the Maelstrom and the post-apocalyptic powers behind them has become simplistic and totally disappointing.

The audience knows waiting for "something wonderful to happen" when in reality we wait that same unclear, dimwitted, and ultimately unfortunate mythical ring that enveloped us back in 1968. Instead of waiting for "wow" or "wow" or even saying "the answer," we waited down to once again believe in metaphysical mystery. Often by explaining art we destroy it.

COCCON: \*\*\*\*

COCCON, in parts, touches the heart as few fantasy films ever have. The all-star cast featuring surprisingly affecting performances from screen veterans such as Don Ameche, Maureen Stapleton, Hume Cronyn, Jessica Tandy, Jack Gilford, and Milford Miller elevates this film into a compassionate thesis on man's morose search for his own comfortable with death. The humor, the passion, and the poignancy of these actors are woven into beautiful emotional performances that make the audience cry out for more.

But this serious, adult drama has been diluted by inserting whimsy and annoying Steve Buscemi into the plot as the owner of a boat chartered by the crew. I find this a first time as they are surviving in cocoons buried under the ocean waters. Silly love sub-plots hog down the emotional dose that is commensurate by making it appeal to the flimsy, youth-oriented summer audience.

Even though the brilliant film contained subtle but has been packaged to sell to a specific market, enough poignancy and passion remains to render COCCON one of the most emotionally profound fantasy films of the year.

FREEDY THE 13TH - A NEW BEGINNING: \*\*\*

After the pathetic fourth entry in this increasingly erratic series - ironically labeled THE FINAL CHAPTER - I am expecting the absolute worst. But such to both my chagrin and surprise, A NEW BEGINNING, while bringing nothing really new to the series, is surprisingly acceptable and enjoyable. The initial down sequence showing Jason's slayish resurrection from the grave is quite nicely handled - very noisy and nicely photographed.

However, what really makes this 13TH entry to shine is the creative addition of a series array of new music composed as the creation of odd-ball secondary characters. Instead of forcing its audience to realize mayhem and gore with purged throats, the filmmakers have added our whistles with refreshing glues of humor which nicely invigorates the overall production. It is a NEW BEGINNING with a new series for oldtimers, but it nevertheless awakens watching its audience tense and pushing as to the identity of the murderer. I must give credit where credit is due.



THE TERMINATOR is classic "B" exploitation film fare.

THE PUPPET SHOW OF CRIMINAL: \*\*\*\*\*

I haven't enjoyed a Woody Allen picture this much since ANCE HOPE, but PUPPET SHOW qualifies as a fantasy film of the highest order, offering the premise how would a nation movie star of the 1930's act if he suddenly were able to walk off the screen and enter the world of reality. Satiric commentary here is both sharply pointed and emotionally moving - all at the same time.

But the movie is even more poignant and ultimately devastating when dealing with the idea of a character as a lonely, abused wife and turns to larger-than-life fantasies on the silver screen as a means of surviving a dreary life. And the movie also offers another premise: can the world of reality and fantasy coexist when suddenly they are both juxtaposed? After at first exploring this strange relationship between a very obscure, lonely woman and her silver screen fantasy on a medical level, Allen's vision turns delicately dark and fatalistic delivering a stunning kick-in-the-grass finale.

Never in the annals of film has such a light-hearted fantasy turned brilliantly up so fast, so unexpectedly. It is a triumph to the genre that an artist such as Woody Allen dares in the realm of fantasy as frequently as he does.

LIFEFORCE: \*\*\*\*

Sometimes without fully flawed films are the most rewarding because, whatever their shortcomings, the filmmakers involved showed their creative muscles and attempted to do something a little differently.

In my way it is among with John Wood's LIFEFORCE. Its non-conformist title [the original title, SPACE-1999, is much more effective], its overly confusing and difficult plot, its pedestrian outer space/robot visual effects created by John Badham, and its over-use of showing mechanical costumes rather to literary life, etc. It would be so very easy to dismiss LIFEFORCE as a relic 25 million dollar failure.

But so much of LIFEFORCE is intriguing and worth analysis. The film most closely resembles the classic FIVE MILLION YEARS TO LOST, the Huxley Quatermass film, with its very basic plot, its emphasis on very hard-core scientific explanation for the mythical/supernatural - in this case, a scientific explanation for samples - and LIFEFORCE even features a Quatermass cloned professor in the person of actor Frank Finlay.

The film's blazing finale - showing in visual detail the souls of the citizens of London being sucked toward, and ultimately, the alien victory on the city lines in ruin - is certainly gutsy and awe-inspiring.

Even the inclusion of the nude Jane Fonda [Nude May] has not played for its erotic potential. Instead, her nude face becomes as cold and calculating a horror as any other screen horror.

LIFEFORCE forces the audience to grow as with the movie reminds it into jolting scenes. The plot reads more logical sense, but the atmosphere generated, the suspense, and the plot premise all add up to exceptional entertainment. I do not know why, but despite the overwhelming flaws, LIFEFORCE is a very special, intelligent achievement.

# NIGHT OF THE COMET: \*\*\*\*

If the science-fiction science fiction craze of the last year or two has left you cold, if something such as *LOST IN SPACE* was too silly, then *NIGHT OF THE COMET* might provide the middle ground between traditional science fiction drama and new-wave techno-magic.

The film is an intriguing shimmer, full of cosmic energy and two first-rate performances. Catherine Mary Stewart - best known for her performance in *THE LAST STARSPARK* - is found here with Melvyn Frank and portrays her dizzy over-the-hill sister. Of the two performances, it is probably the dazzling unknown Stewart and Mills not all the stars by curving the great film science-fictioner to full-blown sci-fi. The chemistry between these two well-scripted female characters gives this production its wit and vigor.

Working subtly effective special effects which never call too much attention to themselves, this film becomes a witty-sad human drama about the end of the world. Akin to *Twelve O'Clock* which depicts the few human survivors around every street corner, but especially terrifying them in their dreams.

*NIGHT OF THE COMET* actually tries to capture the overly familiar, and while it does make a mistake here and there, on the whole it seduces, charms, and delights only too well.

# THE GORRIES: \*\*\*\*

While it is a shame to see Richard Donner's heart-felt, four year dedication in preparing *LOST IN SPACE* for the screen be greeted with yawns and short theatrical runs, it is a fitting reward that Donner connected with Steven Spielberg to be allowed to direct the next film in the *GORRIES* series. It is the soul of a *LOST IN SPACE*, yet a film that always manages to entertain.

*THE GORRIES* is a fantasy-adventure that features wonderful ensemble performances from a primarily single cast of young performers. Perfectly effective is the constantly frightened little girl here, excellently performed by Jeff E. Cohen, and steals many scenes. Also, the invincible monster Slouch, as performed by former pro football player Joe Webb, is totally mesmerizing with his little giggling eyes and exposed arms reminding the audience of a madman with only *Ben-Hur*'s glacial reaction. The defenseless cold-warrior from *Two Women's* THE *LOST*.

The film plays better than it should simply because of the chemistry and the clever dialogue (very realistically delivered in a realistic manner) and we all completely interrupting another - but don't miss the subtlest of details. The film is a masterpiece, the following going and unraveling of the plot, and finally, the sense of magic and the extreme attention to the fine detail in the constantly changing set design. *THE GORRIES* may be fluff, but it is artistically delivered with a real sense of creative pride.

# BUNE: \*\*\*\*

*BUNE* is undoubtedly the most understated fantasy film of last year. Director Basil Lynch portrayed an admirable job of translating the essence of the film to the screen yet still maintaining his personal idiosyncratic trademarks.

True, the narrative is difficult to follow - but only the subtleties of plot are difficult to follow. The basic story, even for those who never read the novel, demands close attention but is really no harder to follow and understand than any other fantasy film (*BLACK RANGER*, for example). What becomes slightly frustrating is the fact that so much narrative detail has been condensed into the first seven, two-hour plus running time. If the studio had the guts to release Lynch's original four-hour cut, I believe this movie would have found its audience. Characters could then be more properly introduced and understood. In the currently released version, characterization appears to be operating at "fast start speed" trying to jam too many plot devices and characters into too short a running time.

Still the visual look of the film with its startling landscapes, odd costumes, and brilliant set design means we also a complete version might some day be released. If my film deserves to be re-discovered in ten years' time, I hope *BUNE* will be the chosen one.

# THE BRIDE: \*\*\*\*

In movies, 0 + 0 can equal 01. In other words, the bride can be less than the sum of the individual components. *THE BRIDE* is the perfect case in point. The film starts out spectacularly with a ten minute montage of Browne's creation sequence from *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* complete with a similar two-story laboratory, Delight fine look-alike and prepares the electrical equipment up above, and the creation of a ghoulish corpse and is brought to electrical life. The sequence ends with the wife's explosion. Brilliant! Then *THE BRIDE* becomes two different films awkwardly joined via heavy-jerk editing. The first movie, starring Biting and Jennifer Beals, is utterly worthless featuring unimpaired performances and unintentional hilarious dialogue. This is real good news.

The second movie, starring Clancy Brown as the Monster who befriends Rinaldo, a little person, is closer to *OF MICE AND MEN* than it is *BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN* - but it is excellent. Clancy Brown turns in a superb performance that is totally different from *Star Trek's* performance as the Monster. Not that Brown is better, but his actions of the movie are dramatically more and emotionally involve the viewer. If *THE BRIDE* developed this one aspect of the two-story movie, it would have been terrifically wonderful. But unfortunately, it was constantly interrupted by Biting and Jennifer Beals whose odd sequence is her sole reason for the movie's existence - of course "performance" by a body double(s) trying to imitate a scene that never quite catches.

# LADYHAWKE: \*\*\*\*

If the world of scenery and magic thrill, if the middle ages and heroic legends and the time for their sacred battles fill you with romantic yearnings, then *Ladyhawk* will be a fantasy film to long cherish.

Richard Donner has created a loving romantic adventure that might have become too heavy with special makeup effects and state-of-the-art visual effects. Instead, Donner reminds that the essence of *LADYHAWKE* is state-of-the-art, and in the one sequence when Nicholas Pinnell is transformed into a hawk by simply cutting from human to animal via blinding light, filters, and eye-dial, close-up photography, the audience is once again reminded that no matter how astounding special effects might be, it is the fact remains that the emotional chemistry which exists between two constant actors is much more gratifying and endearing.

Roger Moore, as the solitary knight trying to salvage his love for his son, is an always effective. The set design and photography excellently establishes the mood and emotional look.

The only serious flaw in the movie is the absolutely sweeping medieval scene which attempts to catch medieval realism in a boring device-like pop-funk rhythm. The movie has a full soundtrack score so deservingly been needed to help complement the grandeur and majestic visual look that permeates throughout every frame.

# THE ADVENTURES OF BUCKAROO SMITH: \*\*

Now since the 60's, the era of the anti-hero, filmmakers have been attempting to create a hero and would be his enough to appeal to our cultured age. Indiana Jones II, in reality, a 1900's serial hero seems to be the only look of the 60's cinema - but he still lives in *Wild West* or *Die Hard*.

Enter Richard Gere - romantic, scientist, rock 'n' roll superstar, student of all martial arts, etc. In other words, the ultimate hero.

As to this movie: Dr. Melvin Lipson in the person of chameleon John Lithgow as the ultimate evil (but also brilliant) scientist. Further add a mixture of disguised aliens, a blend of distorted history concerning Dr. Melvin's brilliant discovery of the war of the world, tons in time travel, and finally add heaping amounts of *Star Trek* domination.

In this era of sequels, prequels, and remakes, it is indeed refreshing to find such an original, quirky, and odd-ball treasure such as *BUCKAROO SMITH*. Unfortunately, the plot is overly convoluted (0-9), slowing the pace down to tedious and less very interesting are introduced to clarify flaws. Besides the film of a movie be deleted over-melodramatic, but one has to deem this film a welcome breath of fresh air, none the less, even when smiling all the time.

# A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET: \*\*\*\*\*

Was *CRUISING* the first film to defile, *A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET* easily takes as one of the best horror movies of the past several years. Not only does it terrify it manages to do so intelligently.

Reminiscent of the twisted horror horror: the defensible female who is kidnapped after involving in sex, the indestructible teenager, a heroine trapped alone in the house with the fiend - *A NIGHTMARE* does several novel ideas to the max. The fiend, Fred Krueger, exists in the reality of dreams and only breaches his violence when they are asleep (until the very end of the movie). Therefore, all the horror sequences occur as dream reality thereby allowing the *Wagesman's* scene to become belated and elongated, victims run as they are then into anti-matter, and abusive telephone calls primarily as human tongues which grow out of the phone. The basic reason of this film revolves around the premise that dreams are real and the nightmare can kill us. Psychologically, this premise here is terrifying, and director/writer Craven also did it all his work.

Heather Mataris Langevin does an exceptional job as an intelligent, aggressive, and sensitive victim fall for all Freddy Krueger. She never becomes the typical horror film female victim. She literally has to out-think Krueger in order to survive. The fiend from everyone's nightmares - Fred Krueger - from Wes Craven's superior *A NIGHTMARE ON ELM STREET*.





# GRAVE DGGINGS

Hi Gary:

Speaking of memory, don't forget to mention that it was Charles Griffith and not Mel Welles who directed second unit on LITTLE SHOP OF HORRORS, and that Carmen Filles have long since changed their distribution situation from the way it was described in the interview.

A couple of addendums - the "complete" list of films that Karl Struss worked on that I thought I had turned out to be missing one other significant title ALLEGRA MORIA, a slight genre effort which may well be the last feature that Struss worked on. Sorry about the omission on the place I sent you. I do endeavor to be as complete and as accurate as possible.

A few small addendums to Griffith's place. Talking with Beach Blanket Genie came was always mislabeled in the credits of films he did for Cressett. I found that it was he, not Sam Heintzberg, who shared SAMP CRAIG acting duties with Ed Nelson. Additionally, when Chuck says he and Roger got shipwrecked, that doesn't mean that the ship sank, but rather that Roger got sick and insisted on going ashore. The boat had to leave and so both Roger and Chuck were stranded on a small island in the Mediterranean for a time. Also, Griffith's idea was to add Italian muscle (i.e. Hercules) versus into comedies, not musicals.

I should also mention that when Severly Garland blazed the creature from IT CONQUERED THE WORLD over, that was before they built the control point on top of the skull body. Somebody told Roger that Venus had a heavy gravity and so therefore it was originally decided that the alien should have a skull body such as an alien from a heavy gravity planet would have. Unfortunately, after Garland's reaction, it was decided that a taller alien was needed if it were to be at all menacing.

Finally, I really liked the Ed Dean interview - but my god you do the reading and in some instances refer to him as William. Don't I will now have to look forward to the next issue by waiting a while year.

All the best,  
Devlin Fischer  
Los Angeles, CA

[Devlin, first of all let me say it was my editorial type and not yours that had Mel Welles directed second unit on LITTLE SHOP. While I'm editing cover, let me say that I seriously goofed when I sent the information for the Edward Galt title art to Allen Karsendall. I mistakenly wrote William Galt's name and Allen's art reflects the error. The magazine was then based upon the article referring to all concerned, I am sorry - CB]

Dear Gary Smith:

Midnight Magazine # 35 was another great issue. As usual, I enjoyed the interviews the most, especially the Charles Griffith one. Those early low-budget movies can be very entertaining to watch. I really enjoyed PLAN 9 FROM OUTER SPACE, and would like to see some material on THIS in Midler. It's sad that PLAN 9 was claimed to be a scam scam!

I'd rather not see the next listing of movie books in the next issue. It's too much space to take up in a time that only comes out once a year, especially when most readers probably won't even see the books anyway. A book review column is different, since criticism is involved.

As usual, Midler #35 has some great artwork. Allen Karsendall has really helped the rise with his great artwork and article headings. Midler #31-35 are more presentable than before, and they make good use of space. Nelson's cover is good, out Michael Jackson on the cover of MIDNIGHT MAGAZINE!!!

I agree with your opinion on movie's reviews in movie theaters. I'm also more and more unimpressed with the theaters themselves. I remember on vacation in Denver in 1970 watching STRIP WENT ON A PAGE curved screen at the Cooper Theater, and how much better it makes watching a film.

Looking forward to #36,  
Ray Schoofish  
Green Point Woods, ME

I'd agreed with many readers who expressed the thought that another fantasy movie book listing would be too space consuming. Therefore, Dave is publishing his own one-shot volume of book listings. I have seen the "magazine" and I encourage all Midler readers to support Dave by buying both volumes. See his ad elsewhere in the issue! - CB]

Dear Gary:

First off, congratulations on Midler's good review in the April 1985 issue of *File Comment*. Secondly, congratulations on your twenty eight years of discussing fantastic cinema.

I enjoyed your article in the last issue of Midler about ROBERT CARR and THE EVIL DEAD very much. In the article you state that in the future better films will only get bloodier and in essence will become "bitten gone pictures." This may or may not be true, only time will tell us. I feel that if pictures do in fact get bloodier then they had better be funny. Blood humor is what will carry the cinema through the crisis days of David Lynch.

If a picture just contains blood and head-biting violence, it will be impossible to digest (i.e. William Lustig's ANARCHY and Greg's LAST HOUSE ON THE LEFT). As "bitten gone pictures" can reveal some things seriously. If in ones it will just be a reflection on conflict in the real world and that defeats the purpose. After all, don't we go to the movies to forget about the real world and take residence in a more-believe world?

I think Henrietta, Rafei, Green (finally), Brown, and Dan Curtis all know this and as have nothing to fear from them.

On the other hand someone (like Tom Hopper) looks on a very thin line. The THING CHAIN SAW MANIAC was very good but Hopper left out some. We have to struggle from within ourselves to laugh at his picture - because we have no help from the filmmaker. Hopper, fortunately, has followed CHAIN SAW with some other genre films that are far from crassity and have a laugh here and there. To kill a second and prefer first, perhaps if Chai Saw had gone on in it. It would not be the classic it is today. Some place no humor equals a screaming film, even for the most hard-core horror fan.

Good luck with Midler, Gary. Keep watching the skies and the fog. Can't really say I wish you sweet dreams.

Ralph Cox  
Riverside, VA 22193

Dear Gary:

I don't care what anyone says. John Carpenter's THE THING is the all time best horror film it is set up perfectly from the successful hunting across the screen (which gives the viewer a powerful rush) to the transformation scenes. The ending is very powerful! Each scene gives a high realism performance, especially Kurt Russell, Wilford Brimley, and David Clennon. That movie, when I saw it in the summer of 1982, lifted me out of the chair so many times I can't count it is better than THE EVIL DEAD (even re-released) or any Schwarzenegger movie. So anyone raised as seeing THE THING it's a shame. Why don't you extensively cover it - the story, the script, and most of all, the director! I'll always praise Carpenter because his movies encourage me to watch all films.

Sincerely,

Ray Warner

Westing Park, VA

[My only regret was a few years ago, after giving THE THING a rave review in 3-star rating], I omitted my annual "Mid-Midnight" award to *PULVERIZER*. This has already proven THE THING to be the best horror/fantasy film of that year! - CB]

Dear Gary:

Midler #35 is fascinating as always. My only complaint is the appearance of Michael Jackson on your cover (though the editor's rendering is excellent). Still, it's an interesting statement on the lack of decent genre films during the music 1984 period.

My favorite review of Midler is your coverage of the more obscure film personalities in the horror field. I especially enjoyed the articles on Charles Griffith and Dave Rott. The many wonderfully sleazy films of the 50's are a constant source of entertainment for me.

I see that Mr. Rosenzweig has assumed a position of dominance in your layout, and rightfully so - his work is perfect for Midler, and it just gets better each time I see it. I say that it's high time Allen was offered a front cover.

Yours respectfully,  
Robert H. Knox  
Berler, NH



